Letters to Nami

a Nami Shipping Zine

Introduction

Hello, dear reader! Welcome to Letters to Nami! This Fanzine is dedicated to our lovely Straw Hat Navigator and her many, many romantic adventures!

The main theme of this book is all the different ships involving Nami herself. From the most popular to the most unknown, every single one of them is welcome here with open arms! Nami is such a fun character to pair with different people for a variety of different reasons: She's such a well-rounded character with a fiery personality that bounces off greatly with other characters, she's one of the most beautiful women in the One Piece world with a kind heart on top of it. Who wouldn't want to win her love and affections? You could even say Nami is a "cheat code" because no matter who you pair her with, she will make the pair work all by herself!

The sea of romance is vast and who better to get us through it than Nami?

We hope you enjoy this little love letter we have created for her! All our amazing contributors did a fantastic job, they are the real stars here, the magic starts with them!

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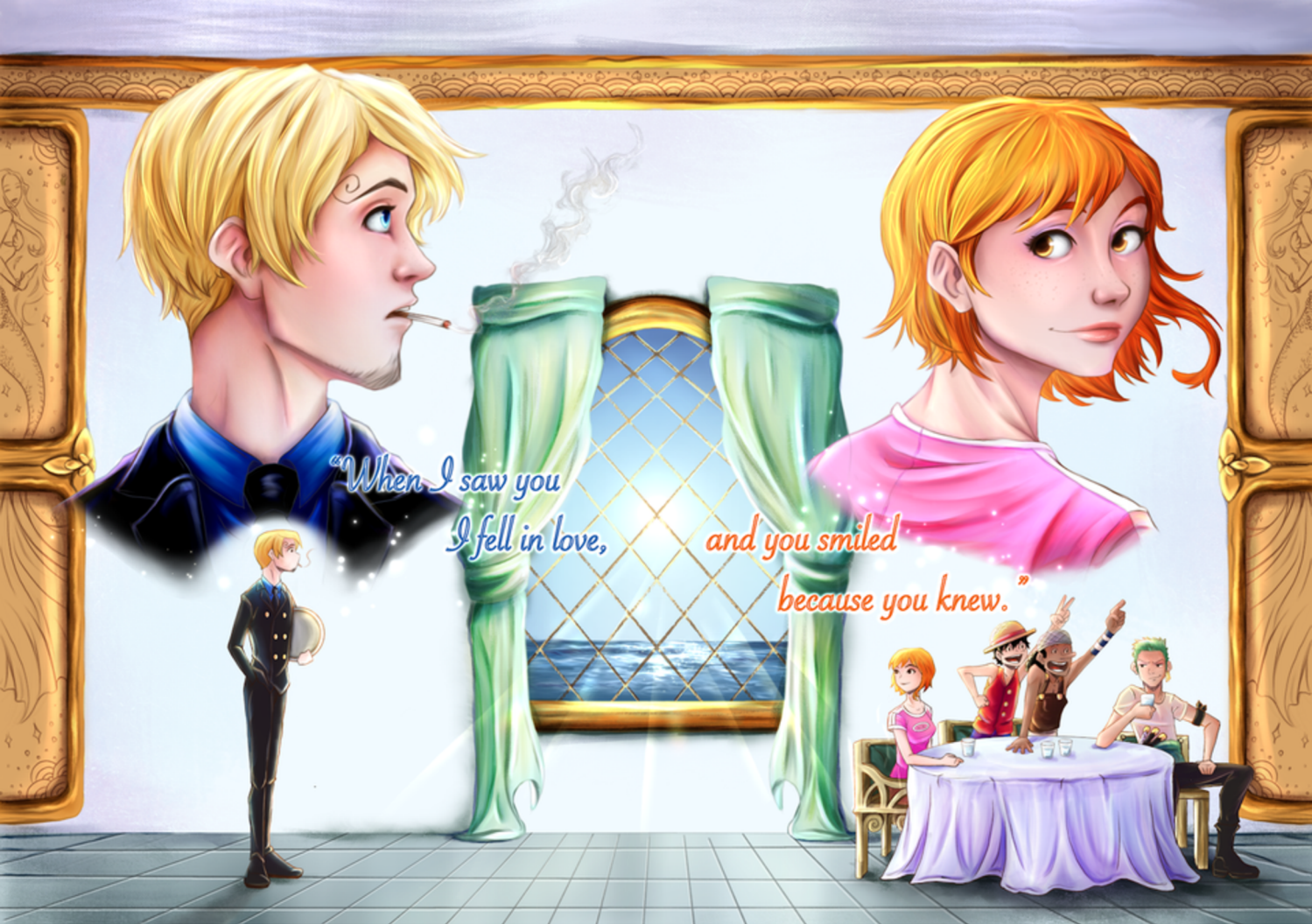
Letters to Nami

CHAPTER 1:

STRAW HAT PIRATES

POP CORN
POP CORN


"When I saw you
I fell in love,
and you smiled
because you knew."

BANNED
FROM
THE
KITCHEN
BANNED
From the
Kitchen
THIS
Guy
Forever
Cookies
Boef
Bourguignon
Beef
Butter
onions
garlic
Sake
groceries
BEST
cook

An Unlikely Royal

By: Rory

The blooming debutants of this year's social season had finally reached its first ball, anxiously adorned with their intricately decorated dresses of ivory. Many of the young women shining brighter than stars that scattered in the clear night and beginning to draw the eyes and attention of the eager single men of the Ton.

Gone were the days of excitement for the announcement of the Diamond of the Season, as everyone was aware Queen Charlotte would be naming one of her daughters Diamond, a clever and cunning ruse to make her children seem desirable in the marriage mart in their debut. However, the debacle of Princess Lola a few years prior was still on the minds of the men hungry to secure a good match, fast. Now the excitement among the social season came in the thrill of the chase, while it could get nasty, one was never short of gossip and spectacle.

"Announcing the right honourable Countess Belle-mere Mikan and her two daughters, Miss Nami and Miss Nijiko."

Heads turned quickly to see the announcement garnered some attention, men nudging those they frequented bars with to witness the arrival of the three ladies of the house Mikan, the two young misses fresh onto the marriage mart just as the oranges from their home within Cocoyashi were. It was also one of the daughters that shone with the same brilliant orange hues tonight, a tiara settling into the controlled cascade of curls that framed her face, two diamond earrings, and a decorative necklace sitting nicely across her collarbone. The ivory dress sat elegantly on her with a silk sash just under her bust which led into a layer of expensive lace that acted as an open skirt around the silk base of the dress. It was a statement to her own wealth and it gave the young woman confidence in her step.

"Nami?" Her mother whispered as Nami realised she was staring over the room a little too much, basking in the grandeur of the crystal chandeliers, bigger than the carriage they rode to the ball, chained to the painted ceiling

of silver fauna and florals representing the gracious guests who hosted the first ball every season.

“Oh, sorry, it’s just-”

“Breathtaking.” Nojiko, her older sister, finished the sentence for her with a gasp. The eldest Mikan daughter dressed in a much more modest way, blue hair in a neatly tied updo, small diamonds embedded into the tresses that stayed obedient in the style, silken dress with a lace bodice sharing the same little signs of shimmer.

“If it gets too much, Nami, you know I didn’t want to rush your entrance into society.” Belle-mere reminded her youngest, her own fuschia hair matching similarly to Nami’s curled presentation, ivory dress simple, understated, but still worthy of that of her station.

“Not a chance I was going to let my sister debut alone, Mama.” Nami smiles wide, taking Nojiko’s arm in hers, the sisters giggling softly together as the crowded room threatened to swallow them whole before the host of the ball stepped in to greet them. “Grand Duke Silvers.” The girls bowed in unison, yet found themselves unable to let go of the comfort of one another’s grip. Belle-mere rushed forward with a worried expression but bowing all the same. “Thank you for the invitation this evening, your home is beautiful.”

“Well, Miss Nami, I thank you for your kind words.” Rayleigh chuckled, bowing his head politely. “Countess Mikan, your daughters are shining as much as you do.”

“Why thank you, your grace, I don’t deserve such praise.” Blushing a little, Belle-mere smiled at one of the most respected and decorated members in the Ton, known for two things, his kindness and silver. It was rumoured the man wore it in the threads that held his clothes together as well as the beautiful grey hair that shone like the precious metal.

"I hope you all enjoy your evenings, but please do not feel overwhelmed by it all. While my debut was long before you all, I too remember the anxious feeling of not knowing."

"Thank you, your grace." Nojiko bowed softly as Nami followed with respect for their host, showing in her smile too. Rayleigh left them soon after and the ladies of Mikan found themselves mingling along houses they knew before the gentlemen in the room began to descend on their peace, bringing with them the same monotonous and vapid words as if it was a routine.

"What are your hobbies?"

"How many children do you want in the future?"

"You know, my greatest achievement…"

Nami sighed heavily, almost being brazen enough to roll her eyes in front of one lord who bored her with grand stories of countries far out of her own reach, time at sea and-

"I see, yes. Well, I thank you for your time, my lord." The orange-haired debutant cut the lord off quickly, Nojiko looking to her younger sister, whose deep brown eyes grew in languor, before she excused herself to leave for refreshments near an open window. As Belle-mere approached as the small string section struck up a melody for the first dance of the night, Nojiko found herself without a man yet some began to push one another for a chance to approach the blue haired beauty. Nami was left to the sidelines awkwardly beside her mother. "Mama-"

"Perhaps it was too early for your debut, Nami." Belle-mere comforted her daughter.

"No, perhaps it is all the other dull and pitiful men who should have never

debuted." Nami scoffed into her lemonade. "If I am told of another grand, and possibly, fabricated tale of grandeur I shall pass from boredom."

"Don't be so dramatic-"

"Countess Belle-mere." Their attention was quickly pulled from one another, the moment of respite cut short by a tall and wide man with thick blonde hair, age setting into his facial features as well as a pointed moustache. Her mother stood more upright at the presence that cut their pause on the evening short.

"King Vinsmoke, how good it is to see you." She half lied, the man before her having a reputation of being cruel and cold to all he met, the expression on his face at the very moment nothing short but sour. Nami bowed quickly. "Nami, this is King Judge Vinsmoke, he has travelled from Germa I believe?"

"Correct. My sons are hoping to make matches this season." He informs them, taking a sip from the glass in his hand that looked impossibly small.

"Is it their debut this summer?"

"No, sadly not. It is their second season."

"I pray for them to find good luck in this season." Belle-mere nods respectfully, about to take her youngest daughter away from the father of infamous rakes.

"Perhaps your daughter has room on her dance card for my three young sons? I believe they are of similar age."

"Three? I thought you had the fortune of four sons, your majesty?" Judge didn't entertain this question with an answer, instead clicking his fingers

loudly, three men moving forward to stand by his side as if they were soldiers reporting to their commanding officer.

“My eldest, Prince Ichiji,” On queue each of the men stepped forward, beginning with one with crimson red hair, curled eyebrows being a defining familial trait among them, Ichiji nodded with a sly smirk. “Prince Niji, my second eldest,” The sweeping mop of blue hair bowed next to the debutant, looking to his red-haired brother for a moment with a smile. “And Prince Yonji, my youngest.” Lastly the green-haired son stepped forward, a little heavier footed than the other two, lowering his head slightly. There was something unsettling to Nami about all of them. Perhaps it was the subtle lecherous gaze in the older two brothers, the youngest not getting the notion of subtly as well as the others, or maybe it was just the way they conducted themselves with a dry smugness painted in their smiles.

“An honour to meet you all.” Nami manages to say.

“Is your dance card full, miss?” Niji questions quickly.

“Oh-uh-”

“Then we shall have to remedy that.” Ichiji stepped forward eagerly, holding his hand out for the card wrapped nicely around her wrist, Nami looking to her mother, who gave a weary but reassuring smile as the dance card received the names of all three brothers. “I believe it is my dance to start with, I am the eldest of course.” Nami laughed awkwardly as the redhead extended his hand to begin the dance with her. As the strings began their next song, even Nami could not deny that Ichiji ledher across the dancefloor with a regal stature that matched the title of prince. Still that uneasy feeling rose in her stomach as his hand touched her hip a little too high.

“Look…” The whispers began to strike up as expected. “Isn’t that-”

"Yes, one of the rake princes from Germa." Nami sighed at the encroaching gossip. It was only her first dance of the evening and everyone had far too much to say about the princes already.

"Well aren't they all jealous?" Ichiji said, looking around the room with a smug grin.

"I do not hear jealousy, prince, I hear only the whispers of the man they assume you to be." Nami responds, only looking into his cold eyes, mirroring the King's own icy greeting.

"And what do you think of these whispers, miss?"

"They could spell some truth. After all, being a prince from a far country as Germa must mean the rumours follow you even to here." Ichiji scoffs a little.

"You've a smart mouth."

"I promise you, it isn't my mouth that is just smart." Raising a challenging eyebrow, Nami wore her own half smirk in the arms of the smug prince who shifted stoic at the quick wit of the woman. As the redhead spun her in the dance, Nami's gaze found a burst of yellow among the crowd, a familiar curled eyebrow nestled among the golden tresses. Before she could even utter a question, the redhead was replaced with the second prince, blue-haired and eagerly holding her against his body.

"I believe it is my turn now." Niji smiled, taking her hand to his lips before holding it, the melody belonging to the quadrille echoing in the hall.

"Tell me, Prince Niji," Nami asked some time after. "Do you have only two brothers?"

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"That is what my father, the *king*, has told you. It must be true." He replies with caution on his tongue. "Do you question your queen?"

"No, I just though-"

"You thought wrong, whatever you are thinking of, you need to focus on me and this dance."

"And how are you making me feel like you deserve my attention? By threatening me for asking questions?"

"Women should only ever speak when spoken to, miss, you surely know this."

"Do you wish me to stop speaking?"

"Presently, yes."

"Then stop talking to me." Grinding her teeth slightly, Nami looked away in displeasure from her dance partner as Niji shook his head, leaving the woman on the dancefloor alone, left to face the looks and stares of those around the hall. Humiliation sunk in before whispers consumed her ears once more, to be abandoned by a rake of a prince…there was not a corner dark enough for her to hide, no land that could shelter her from the rising ridicule.

"Excuse me? Miss?" Turning her head quickly, Nami faced that flash of gold in the crowd in the form of a man, smiling softly with kind sapphire eyes, light stubble peppering his upper lip. There was something so oddly comforting about the humble appearance of the young man who held out his hand but that curled eyebrow… "Allow me to continue in the prince's absence?"

"O-of course." Nervously, she took his hand, the golden haired young man

moving with grace, leading them effortlessly into the quadrille. They spoke no words to one another, Nami fixated on the kind blue eyes and the space above his eyes a little obsessively.

“You know, your hair reminds me of a beautiful orangery in summer.” He said suddenly, eyes widening behind the fringe that guarded half his face. “I mean- I-”

“Nearing the end of our dance, that is how you wish for me to remember you?” Nami chuckles softly.

“Yes, while in its nature it is somewhat terrible, it is the truth and I am a man of my honour.” He nods, cheeks going a little red at the realisation of his honest mouth, making her laugh out loud. Carefully, she covered her mouth from a loud sound of amusement erupting.

“And does this man of honour have a name?”

“Sanji. Just Sanji.”

“Very well, Just Sanji, The Man of Honour. Would you like to get some refreshments after you have saved me the utter humiliation of being left on the dancefloor by a prince?”

“I would consider it an honour, miss.” Sanji nodded with a small smile before leaning in a little. “Although you can do better than all three of those rakes put together.” As he stood up straight to end the dance with a bow, Nami couldn’t help but feel a genuine smile consume her.

“Miss?” Yonji approached, almost puffing out his chest in an attempt to look bigger than the man she was with, glaring him down. “I believe it is-”

“No, I have no interest in dancing with any more Princes of Germa.”

Curtly, she turned heel and went to walk away before the youngest prince called after her.

"Then you'll want to avoid him too!" With a little childish growl, he disappeared back to his family, Sanji rushing after Nami into the crowds as the wheels turned in her head.

"Miss Nami-"

"You're a prince too?" Nami asked, irritated. Another plot for the Germa Kingdom to get her hand and for why? "Why are you *all* obsessed with me?!" The orange-haired debutante stormed off a little onto a lower floor balcony within the watchful eye of her chaperone. There was going to be enough sordid rumours from today alone. The doubt within Nami's mind grew loud. This was a mistake, her mother was right, it was too early to play these games of marriage and courtship-

"It is natural for someone so beautiful to draw the eye of eager men, like witnessing a shooting star in the night, you want to chase it, know its beauty closely and see the star for what it truly is!" Sanji blurted out, following the woman to the balcony, causing her to freeze on the spot.

"Catching falling stars feels like something a careless dreamer would say." Nami half scoffs, turning to the golden-haired prince before resting her arms on the balcony's cold stone surface.

"Is that a crime, my lady?"

"No. I guess it isn't." Allowing Sanji to join her, he leans over the balcony that overlooked the lengthy garden of rose bushes and hedge mazes. "Are you a prince of Germa too?"

"Not the same type as them. My father likes to pretend I do not exist

which is fortunate when I wish to dream quietly to myself about those shooting stars." He jokes before turning sincere. "I apologise I did not introduce myself sooner. I confess in my first season I found myself drowning in beautiful women yet…there's something in your eyes about you."

"Bold of you to speak so honestly." Nami smiles softly. "Is it because I remind you of a fruit?" They share a laugh, Sanji shaking his head.

"I struggled to even introduce myself to you, you wish to remind me of the humiliation I faced, how cruel!" Rolling her eyes, Nami couldn't help but find the prince becoming the most genuine conversation she'd held all evening, the most sincere and honest man to approach her. "You reminded me of something that gives me comfort."

"Oh?"

"I spend a lot of time…cooking." Sanji whispers to the orange-haired woman beside him.

"You're royalty. Why?"

"Freedom. And this old guy, our head chef, he's taught me skills I never thought I could possess."

"And when you see me you see-"

"Within the walls of a kitchen I am…free. You remind me of that freedom I long for and I somehow see it in your eyes. The way your hair shines, your eyes glaze over when overzealous lords approach you."

"I don't believe in love at first sight yet you speak to me as if you feel it at this moment."

"I wouldn't ask you to believe in love at first sight like a helpless dreamer like myself, only want to give this dreamer a chance."

"It could cost you." Nami teases.

"Name your price, it is yours."

"Gold." The teasing tone was gone for a moment, Sanji's visible eyebrow lifting in shock.

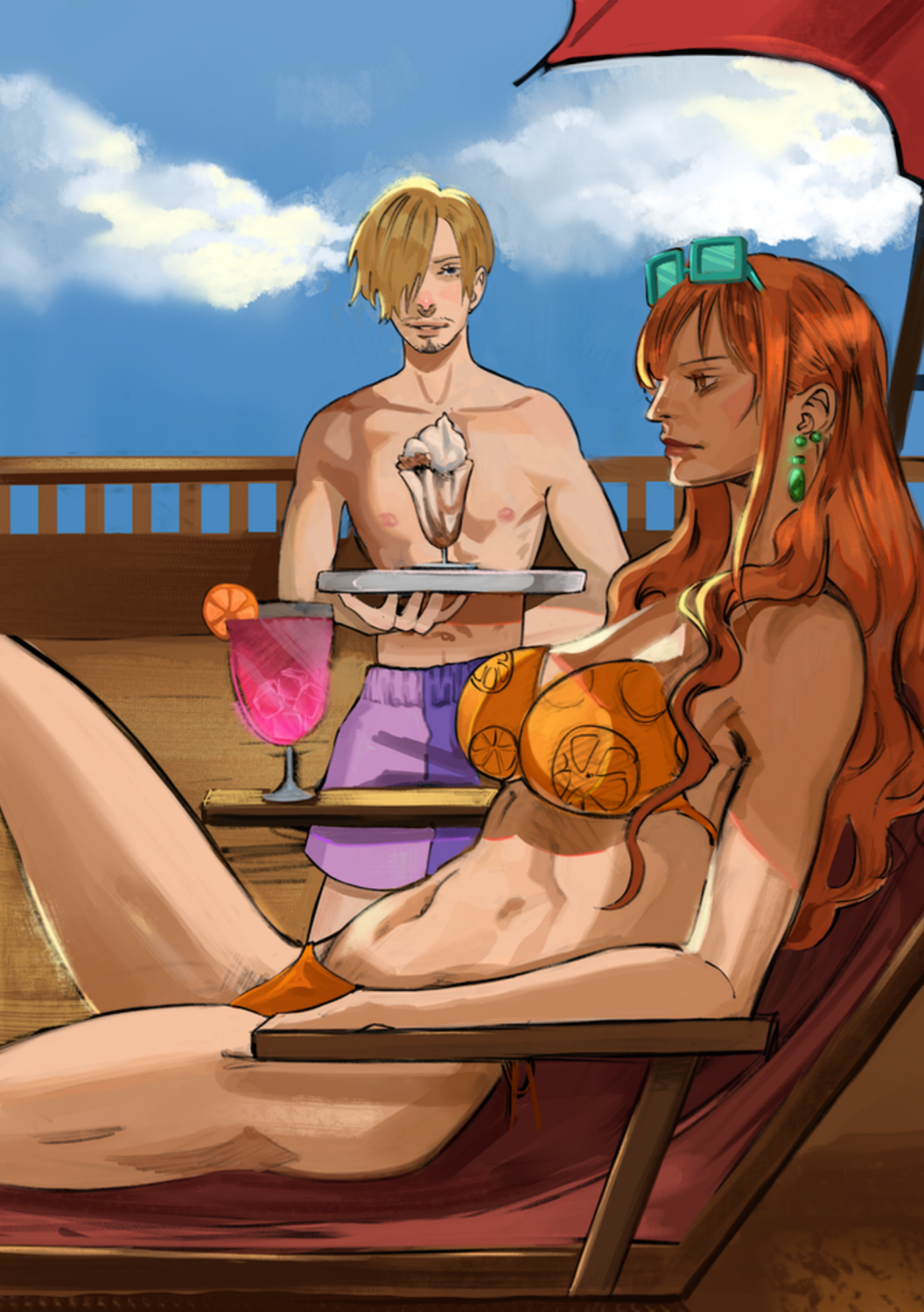
"O-Oh."

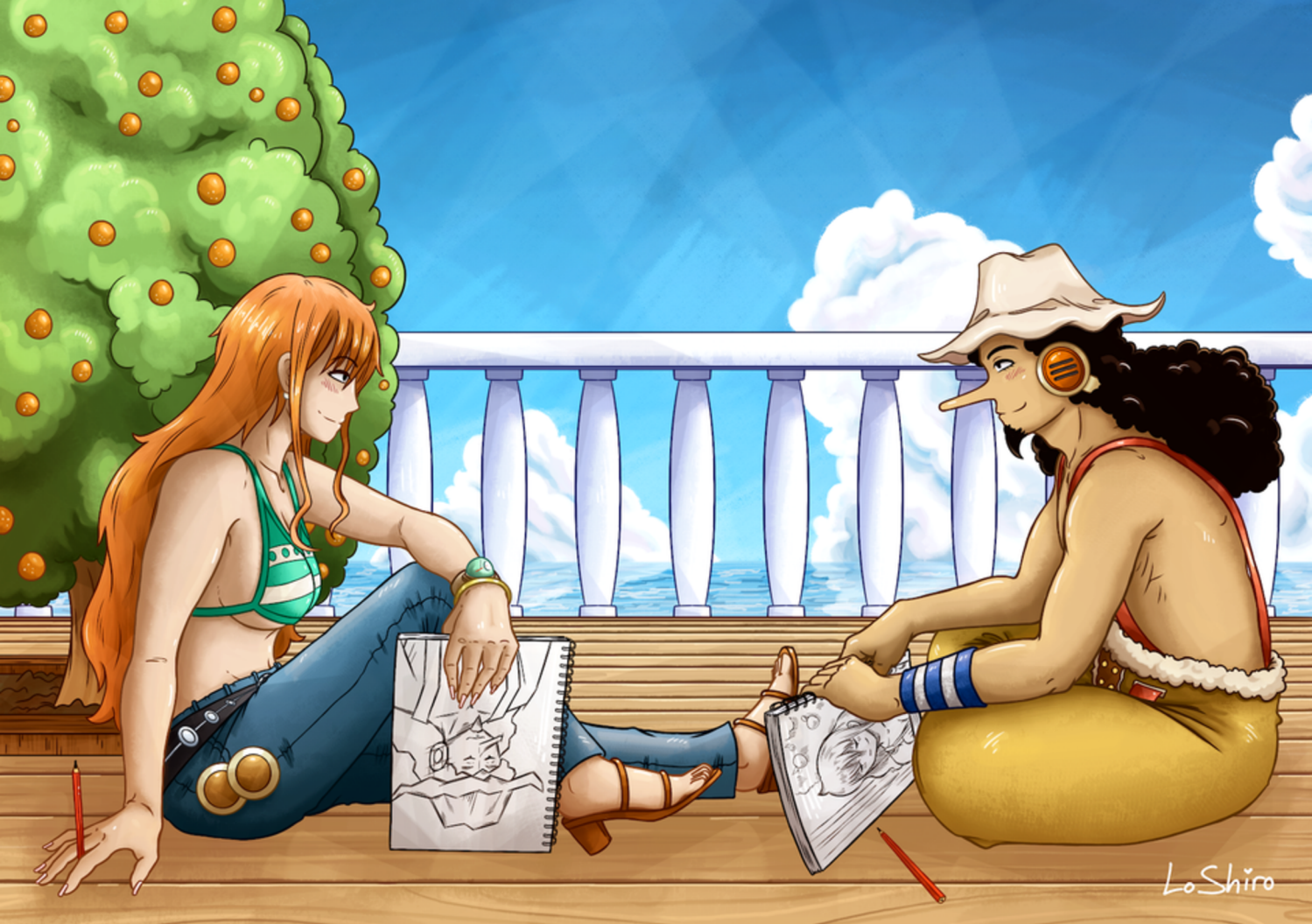
"It reminds me of your hair." Looking down at her hands before looking at the prince once more, her face shifts into softness. "I just so happen to like gold too…"

"Do you happen to like dancing much?"

"I do."

"Then…" Sanji bowed before the debutante, his fringe lifting over his covered blue eye for a second, hand reaching for hers. "Shall we dance some more?"




LoShiro

Ink and Dust

By: Meg

Nami strolled through the bustling market, her eyes scanning the colorful stalls for something unique. Her gaze fell upon a dusty old book tucked away on a rickety shelf. Curiosity piqued, she picked it up, feeling the weight of its age in her hands. The leather cover was worn, the gold lettering faded, and when Nami opened the book she was hit with the faint scent of vanilla. As she thumbed through the book's pages, a folded letter fell out.

Yellowed and fragile, the letter was addressed to a "Miss Nico Robin" in elegant, flowing script. Nami knew it wasn't right to read someone else's mail, but her curiosity got the better of her.

Robin—
I don't know if this letter will ever reach you, but I write this in the hopes that one day you'll find peace. The life you've lived, the things you've seen, no one should carry such a burden alone. I wish I could be there, to tell you in person, but you know I cannot. The world we live in isn't terribly kind to people like us. I'm lucky to even be alive today. But that's besides the point. Remember what I said to you all those years ago? There's nothing more ridiculous than being born in this world to be alone. Perhaps one day I won't have to hide anymore, but until then, I hope you've found people you can call true friends.

Nami frowned. She flipped the letter over, but there was no signature. Whoever had written it clearly hadn't intended for it to be read by anyone other than Robin. The name tugged at Nami's memory, but she couldn't place it. Still, something about the letter struck her. Perhaps it was the sorrow woven between the lines, or the sense that Robin had once meant something to someone important.

For a moment, Nami hesitated, contemplating what to do. But then, as if driven by impulse, she reached into her bag and pulled out a pen and a scrap of paper.

Miss Nico Robin,
I found this letter in an old book at a market. It seems like it never reached you, but I felt like it should. I'm sorry for prying, but something about it made me think it belongs with you.
—Nami

She folded the note, tucked it back into the envelope with the original letter, and sealed it with the faintest smile. It was a simple act, but one that carried weight. She didn't expect to hear back. It was a long shot that the address was even still valid. Still, she found herself returning to the post office that same afternoon, dropping the letter into the box before she could change her mind.

Reading the letter was a major violation of privacy. But then, if Nami hadn't read it, she never would've even thought about sending it back. It's not that she would've thrown it away; that just seemed wrong to her. She probably would've just left it where the book had been, and it would have never been seen by its intended recipient.

Whoever this Robin lady was, she needed to know that someone in this world was trying to look out for her.

Traveling to the market a few towns over (Nami knew better than to try and steal from the same market twice, especially on consecutive days) the next day, however, Nami wondered if she had made a mistake.

Damn near every stall had a poster stuck to it, showing the largest bounty one could possibly conceive of—still unclaimed to this day. And all of it was on the head of that woman. “Devil Child” was what they called her—what did Robin do to deserve that title? Did Nami want to know? Probably not.

The image of the bounty poster stayed with Nami as she made her way through the narrow streets, her bag slung over her shoulder. She couldn’t shake the thought of Robin’s face, eyes staring out from the poster, both guarded and defiant. It seemed strange to her now, the humanity in that note written to her. That letter had come from someone who saw Robin as more than just a bounty, more than the "Devil Child" the world claimed her to be. Nami couldn’t help but wonder who this Robin really was—and what her story might be.

Days passed, and Nami had almost forgotten about the letter when a response arrived, a worn envelope with her name written in delicate script. She opened it carefully, her heart beating a little faster with curiosity and something else she couldn’t name.

Dear Nami,

Thank you for sending me that letter. It was an unexpected gift—and a reminder of someone from a life long past. I hope it didn't trouble you too much to read such a message. I can only assume that curiosity got the best of you. I've always found that's true of the bold ones. I don't blame you one bit.

I live a rather ... unusual life, to say the absolute least. Most people wouldn't care to reach out like this. I'd be lying if I said it didn't intrigue me. Maybe you're just someone who stumbled onto a piece of someone else's past. Or maybe there's more to your story, too.

Whatever the reason, I'd like to know. Write to me, if you'd like.

Warmly,
Robin

Nami blinked, rereading the letter a few more times. It wasn't what she expected—a simple thank you at most, but even that would've been more than what Nami would expect. She didn't send the letter because she wanted to be thanked for it.

She sat at her rickety desk that evening, the dim lantern casting flickering light over the parchment as she turned over her thoughts. Who was Nico Robin, really? And why did Nami feel the sudden urge to reply? Maybe it was the thrill of it—writing to a wanted outlaw, someone whose life seemed far removed from her own struggles with debts and survival. That's what she chose to believe as she dipped her pen into her ink bottle.

Dear Robin,

I wasn't expecting a reply, but I'm glad you did. You're right, curiosity did get the best of me. That, and something about that letter felt... important. Like it wasn't meant to be lost in the pages of some forgotten book.

As for my story, I suppose you could say it's far less unusual than yours. I grew up in a small town, but life here hasn't exactly been kind. It hasn't been easy, but I've been doing my best to get by, by any means possible. My situation isn't exactly the same thing as a bounty, but let's just say I know a thing or two about having a sword over your head, metaphorically.

But enough about me. You don't seem like the type to sit still for long, judging by your reputation. Is it true what they say about you? The "Devil Child" thing? Or is that just something people say when they don't understand someone?

I don't know why I'm writing this. Maybe I just want to know the truth. Or maybe I just want to keep this strange conversation going. Either way,

I hope this letter finds you well—wherever you are. I don't even know if the address will be the same, but here's hoping.

—Nami

Nami folded the letter and stuck it in an envelope. She hesitated. Thinking back on what she'd written, she put that envelope into another envelope just to be safe. She knew it wouldn't stop anyone who really wanted to see the contents, but the letter felt a little more secure nonetheless.

The reply came sooner than Nami expected. The envelope bore the same elegant handwriting, and she tore it open with an eagerness that surprised her.

Dear Nami,

Your letter reached me faster than I thought possible, given how far I roam these days.

To answer your question, yes, people do call me "Devil Child". I haven't been a child in a long time, but the other half of the title is [scribbled out word] understandable. It's difficult to explain in a letter, but people fear what they don't understand. I can't blame them; that's just the way it is. I imagine you've seen the bounty posters. It must seem strange, writing to someone whose face is plastered across towns as a wanted criminal. Perhaps it should trouble me more than it does, but I've long since stopped worrying about what others think of me.

Still, it's rare to meet someone who doesn't immediately see the bounty on my head. Your curiosity is endearing. It reminds me a little of myself. You see, ever since I was a child, it's been my dream to uncover the truth about the Void Century. Can you believe there's an entire century in history with no record of anything that happened during that time? The government guards it so closely, it's as if they fear what we might find if we were to learn the truth. There's no way they don't know anything, and yet they're willing to demolish their own house if they even suspect that the dwellers know something.

As for your concerns about the address, I'll write the current one at the bottom of every letter, so do not worry.

Until next time,
Robin

Dear Robin,

I'm glad my letter reached you. Part of me thought it might not. It's strange, writing to someone I've never met but feel compelled to know more about. I guess that's the kind of curiosity you mentioned.

"Devil Child", whatever that means, really doesn't suit you. Or at least, it doesn't suit the person who shows up in these letters. But maybe that's the point, right? Names and titles are just what people decide to call us, whether they're true or not. I've seen your bounty posters, and I'd be lying if I said they didn't make me hesitate for a moment. But honestly? The way you write makes it impossible to see you as the monster they want you to be.

I'll admit I never gave something like the Void Century much thought. I didn't realize there was even something to think about in the first place, but I guess that goes to show that you really don't know what you don't know.

Your dream sounds dangerous, but also admirable. I really do hope you'll succeed. Actually, my own dream isn't too far removed from yours, now that I think about it. I don't usually talk about it often, but I hope someday to be able to draw a complete map of the world. (I just realized I didn't tell you about my job yet, sorry!) I'm a cartographer. I've always been fascinated with maps and navigation ever since I was a kid. But I'm not sure the younger me ever thought too hard about how attainable this dream actually is. Sometimes it's hard enough just dealing with real life.

Sorry, I didn't mean to get so depressing. I guess what I'm trying to say is that I understand chasing something bigger than yourself. Anyways, I should probably stop before I ramble too much. Thank you for sharing what you did with me. It means more than you probably realize. I hope you'll write back.

Until then, stay safe.

—Nami

Nami didn't usually have the luxury of thinking about her big dream. Her mind was always preoccupied with what would fetch a high price, what could she get away with stealing, how much more she needed to make the number hanging over her own head go down. It sometimes felt impossible, what with all those zeroes…

Sending off the letter, a disturbing thought entered her mind: Robin has just as many zeroes hanging over her head. The number wasn't just big, it was life-changing. Adding that to what Nami had already managed to save would go beyond clearing her debt. And it would be so easy, too.

Why else are you going out of your way to keep writing to her? A darker voice in her head said. *It's not out of the kindness of your heart and it's surely not because you felt sorry for her.*

Nami stood abruptly, pacing the small room as if moving would dislodge those horrible thoughts from her brain. She already hated herself for considering it. She hated the part of herself that still wanted to argue that it was pragmatic, that it would let her finally follow her dream.

But was it a dream worth following if she had to sell out someone she'd grown to hold dear in order to achieve it?

Dear Nami,

Your letters never fail to make me happy. It's rare these days to have something so... uncomplicated to look forward to. Letters are so different from conversations. They let you think before you speak and let you share pieces of yourself you might not face-to-face.

Your dream of mapping the world is beautiful. That's not a word I use lightly. But something about it feels pure in a way that most things aren't, the way you're trying so hard to hold onto your dream even when the world is giving you every reason to let it go.

I hope you'll keep writing. I want to know more about you and your world.

Until your next letter,
Robin

Dear Robin,

Your letters are starting to feel like small treasures, though I doubt you'd ever take credit for that. They mean more to me than I expected them to, but they also make me wonder about the person on the other side of them. It's one thing to read someone's words and imagine their voice, their expressions, but it's another to see it for yourself.

I guess what I'm trying to say is—

Nami steadied her trembling hand.

—would you ever meet me? Neutral territory, somewhere safe. No bounties. Just us. I think I'd like that. Of course, if that's too risky, I understand. But if you want to, I think we could make it work. I'll leave it up to you. Either way, I'll keep writing.

Take care,
Nami

Dear Nami,

I'm flattered that you've been cherishing my letters. I could say the same about yours. They have a way of pulling me into your world, making me feel like I know you in ways I haven't known someone in a very long time.

Meeting you in person, however, isn't a decision I can make lightly. It *is* risky. My life doesn't allow for much beyond shadows and whispers, and I've learned to be careful about where I place my trust.

And yet, every part of me wants to trust you. So my answer is yes, but with caution. A meeting should happen on my terms, in a place I know well. I'll send you directions in my next letter, and we'll keep it simple. Neutral, as you said.

Until then, stay safe, Nami.

Yours,
Robin

Nami tightened the straps of her satchel as she approached the meeting spot Robin had described: an abandoned ranch on the outskirts of a dusty little trading post. The directions had been precise. Cross the dry creek bed. Pass the broken windmill. Look for the oldest corral, where warped wooden posts leaned like tired old men under the weight of time.

Her nerves tangled as the corral came into view, and with it, a figure leaning casually against the weathered fence. Even from a distance, Robin was unmistakable: dark hair falling loose around her shoulders, her wide-brimmed hat shading a face that seemed at once guarded and serene. The coat she wore hung lightly around her, its hem brushing the dry earth like a shadow.

"You came," Robin said, her voice smooth and steady.

"You didn't make it easy," Nami replied, masking her nerves with a wry smile.

As seconds passed, each word spoken between the two became a little bit easier. Robin seemed just like the person in Nami's letters, except for one important thing: she was gorgeous. Nami had never seen legs as long as Robin's, but they suited her. (Of course, Nami made sure not to stare, only stealing respectful glances like the seasoned thief she was.)

But just as the air between them grew lighter, the distant crunch of boots on dirt shattered the moment.

Robin froze, her gaze darting to the shadows beyond the corral. "We're not alone," she murmured.

Nami's heart dropped. Before she could respond, five figures emerged from the dim light, their boots kicking up small clouds of dust. The setting sun glinted off the barrels of their pistols and the knives at their belts.

"Well, well," one of them sneered, his scarred face twisting into a smirk. "Looks like someone beat us to the punch. Ain't that a kick in the dick?"

"More like a two-for-one special," one of his buddies replied.

Robin's stance shifted immediately. Her arms crossed over her chest in a practiced "X," and with a quiet flutter, limbs began to sprout from the bounty hunters' bodies. Hands twisted their arms, weapons clattered to the ground, and painful submission holds brought cries of pain echoing through the dusty air.

One of the bounty hunters struggled, managing to charge forward. Robin's calm didn't falter as a massive hand sprouted from the ground beneath him, flipping him over and pinning him to the dirt. "You should have chosen a different target," Robin said coldly, her voice steady as stone.

Another lunge was intercepted as hands sprouted directly from the attacker's shoulders, gripping him and wrenching him to the ground. Snap. Nami flinched as the sound echoed under the open sky, followed by a sharp cry of pain.

The last bounty hunter dropped his weapon and bolted, his boots skidding in the dirt as he disappeared into the distance. Robin's sharp eyes tracked him for a moment before she finally relaxed her arms. "There will be more," she said flatly.

Still catching her breath, Nami stepped closer, her heart pounding. "Robin, I had nothing to do with this," she said urgently, the words spilling out before she could stop herself.

Robin turned, her gaze piercing.

"I swear!" Nami continued. "I wouldn't, I couldn't! You have to believe

me.” Her voice softened, almost pleading. “I didn’t come all this way just to betray you.”

Robin studied her for a moment, her expression unreadable. Finally, she nodded, the tension in her shoulders easing. “I believe you,” she said simply. “But we need to move. Now.”

“Where?” Nami asked, gripping her satchel.

“Anywhere but here,” Robin replied.

They ran, boots kicking up dirt and dry grass as the abandoned ranch disappeared behind them. The cool night air stung Nami’s lungs, but she kept pace, following Robin’s steady stride.

When they finally stopped on a ridge overlooking the distant glow of the town, Robin leaned against the trunk of a twisted old mesquite tree, her calm demeanor intact despite the chaos they’d left behind.

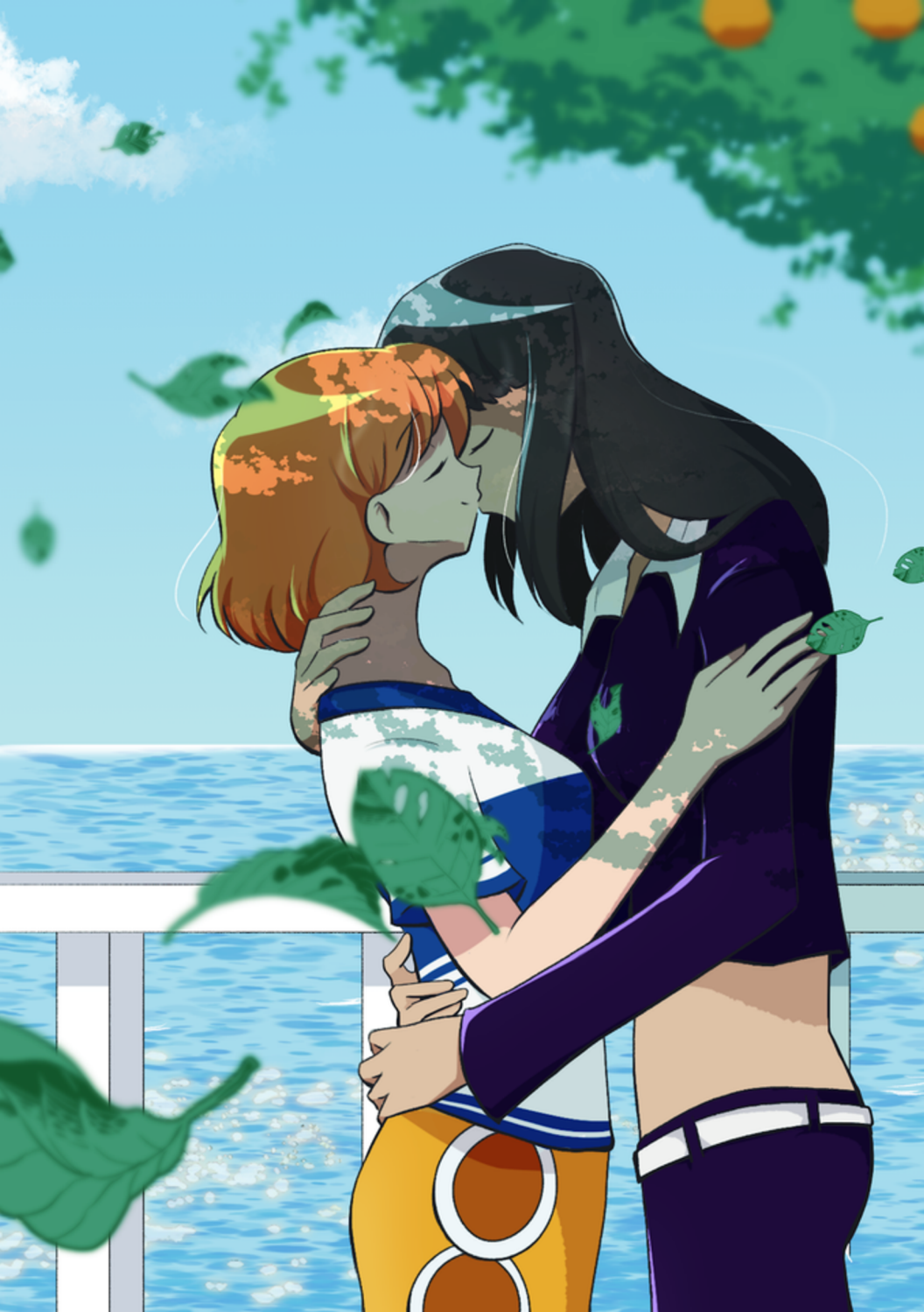
“You didn’t have to stay,” Robin said after a moment, her voice quieter now.

“And let them drag you off or kill you?” Nami huffed, folding her arms. “Even I’m not that selfish.”

Robin’s gaze softened, a flicker of gratitude in her eyes. “No, you’re not.”

Nami hesitated. “Do you really believe me?”

Robin’s lips curved faintly. “I wouldn’t be here with you if I didn’t.”



Cafe Tangerine

Mile markers and bullet casings

By: GemmaRose *Art by: Pluubyy*

Peace and quiet was rare, nowadays. Not that it had been in terribly flush supply before everything went to hell, not with Luffy around, but still. It was different, now that they were potentially risking their lives every time they entered an urban area. Nami brushed a stray lock of hair behind her ear, and glanced up to check her surroundings again. Still calm, still quiet. Luffy and his boyfriend had finished their patrol not too long ago and retreated into the only one of the tiny row-houses which didn't have corpses in it, and she had graciously relocated to Merry's bed with her maps and Robin's notes on known and suspected walker activity, trying to plan the next leg of their journey.

Fuel was, as always, a primary concern. There were still several jerry cans strapped down at the front end of Merry's bed, safely tucked away behind the wide bench-box which served as the battered white pickup's trunk storage. The sooner they could refill the empty ones though, the happier Nami would be. Usopp's trusty pickup and Franky's big, sturdy van were as safe a way as they had to transport their whole group, and until they got where they were going she did *not* want to have to ditch either of them. Unfortunately, neither was terribly fuel-efficient, so Franky had gotten real good at cracking gas stations *real* fast.

With the fuel they had left, and assuming they could drive more or less straight through once they got out of the inevitable choke points at the city exits... Nami marked the three most likely highway-adjacent gas stations they could hit, and traced her pen through the air over the map, dropping it down to leave small dots on potential points of interest. The amount of shelf-stable food available in any given area was a gamble, determined by how dense the population had been beforehand and how many had survived long enough to *need* that food after... well, after.

Anywhere which sold ammunition was potentially worth a stop, of course, especially if it was a sporting goods store. Usopp was still sulking over having lost his bow to a particularly grabby walker a couple towns back, not that he'd ever admit it, and if they could get a new one it would make

his day. Plus, archery was quieter than gunfire, and so long as they weren't hauling ass out of the way of a horde the arrows could usually be retrieved and re-used. Plus, he looked *really* nice when he was practicing with a bow, which was a fringe benefit but not one to be disregarded.

Nami tapped another few little marks onto the nearest sporting goods stores to their route, according to the map, and brushed her hair back behind her ear again. It immediately fell loose, again, and she set her pen down atop the map as she sat up straighter. She should probably re-do her braid, if her hair was coming loose enough to be a nuisance. Robin had chopped hers short, ever the practical one, but Nami refused to give up the years she'd spent growing her hair out just because the world had up and gone to shit. She pulled her hairpin out, tucked it behind her ear, and began undoing her braid, finger-combing as she went.

Even braided it was technically a risk, a walker could easily grab hold of it if a horde got too close, but cutting it felt like defeat. Like admitting that the world would never be normal again, and Nami... she couldn't do that. There had to be some safety to be found still, some hope that the dead would go back to being dead and she could snatch back at least part of her life. So she would keep her hair braided, and the braid pinned up in a bun, and any time someone gave her shit over it she would let them hear from her quarterstaff. Her friends had learned pretty quickly not to give her shit over it.

Setting her hair back to rights was the work of a bare minute, and Nami stood to stretch out and look around again. Head on a swivel, always, especially in urban areas where visibility was so limited. Movement caught her eye, and she slowly crouched down, blindly grabbing for her staff. Lone figure, minimal threat, probably came stumbling out of one of the houses and towards them by chance, but *probably* wasn't good enough when it came to walkers.

A high, warbling whistle—like birdsong, but not quite—drifted through the air, and Nami relaxed. An instant later though, she burst into motion, vaulting over the side of Merry's bed and running for the lone figure walking down the middle of the street. There had been three of them, when they left.

"Zoro." she gasped, staggering to a stop in front of him, then turning to keep pace as he kept marching towards the vehicles which marked their base camp. His backpack bulged, a sure sign that the supply run had been successful, but- "Where are Usopp and Sanji?"

"You mean they're not back yet?" Zoro frowned, looking from her to the truck and van. Robin and Chopper coming to greet them, Franky perched in Sunny's luggage rack turned lookout post. No Usopp, no Sanji. "They're fine, must've gotten lost." Zoro scoffed, slinging his backpack off and setting it down between Merry and Sunny for Robin to begin rifling through. "I'll go back out and grab them."

"Oh no you won't." Franky said, vaulting down to catch Zoro by the elbow.

"Zoro, I need to give you a check-up!" Chopper pleaded, turning his huge dark eyes and trembling lower lip on the member of their friend group most susceptible to them.

"Fine, fine." Zoro huffed, letting Chopper and Franky drag him back to the makeshift treatment centre set up in the back of Sunny. "Your idiots will be back soon enough, Nami." Zoro threw over his shoulder, and Nami wished she could believe him.

"Nami, could you help me sort and inventory all of this, before we put it away?" Robin asked, gesturing to the bulging backpack of Stuff that Zoro had dropped on the cracked asphalt of the road.

"Yeah." Nami forced herself to nod, taking a shuddering breath and letting it all out.

"I'm sure Sanji and Usopp truly are fine." Robin said, as they climbed into the back of Merry and began unloading the contents of Zoro's bag. "For Zoro to have found his way back by sheer luck, they must have gotten turned around."

"But why would they split off from him in the first place?" Nami asked, voicing the worry which gnawed at her breastbone. "What if they split up, and Zoro is the only one who managed *not* to get trapped by a horde we didn't see coming?"

"Nami." Robin pressed her hands together around Nami's shaking ones, trapping them tight in her grasp. "Sanji is an unparalleled martial artist, and most diligent of us all about keeping his gear in good repair. Usopp is a marksman of military calibre, and one of the best of us at making *good* decisions in the heat of the moment. They are both quick on their feet, and good at evading detection. This is all true, yes?"

Nami nodded. Her boys were half the reason she was still alive. Getting out of their college town had been one of the most perilous parts of the journey so far, and she could never have done it without Sanji's unflinching kicks or Usopp's precision shots. "They're good at staying alive." she agreed.

"If they are late in returning, is it more likely that *Zoro* of all people abandoned them, or that they split off to ensure they did not bring a horde down on all our heads?"

"The latter." Nami trembled, and Robin drew her into a gentle embrace. "How are you this calm?" she asked, when she was sure her voice wouldn't break over unshed tears.

"Oh believe me, if it was Franky still out there I would've been heading back out with Zoro to retrieve him." Robin chuckled, and Nami pulled away enough to see her friend's wry smile.

"Yeah, you would." Nami chuckled, leaning her head back against Robin's shoulder. "I just, I can't stand not knowing."

"Once Chopper has given Zoro a clean bill of health, we can discuss options."

"Yeah." Nami sat up and nodded. "Thanks, Robin."

"Any time." Robin gave her hand a squeeze. "Now, we do need to inventory this."

"On it." Nami folded up her map, stuck the pen behind her ear, and together she and Robin got the new supplies listed and mostly stowed. Some things they would be using to make dinner tonight, some had to pass Chopper's review before going into their medical kit, but most of it was good.

That same fluting almost-birdsong whistle rang through the air again, and Nami was over Merry's side faster than thought. Two figures slumped against each other. One with a heavy pack, one with hair even more voluminous than her own, if not half as long. She didn't bother slowing down as she approached them, instead launching herself at Sanji and Usopp both, her arms catching around their shoulders as both of them wrapped arms around her waist.

"Where have you idiots *been*?" she gasped, clutching them both close. "Zoro got back without *either* of you and I-"

"It's alright." Sanji murmured, pressing a kiss to her temple. "We got a little split up, but we're all in one piece."

"You are not going to believe what I've been through." Usopp sighed, his arm around her waist tightening, his whole lanky frame curling around hers.

Chopper pointedly cleared his throat behind her, and Nami reluctantly pulled back from her boys—safe and sound, here and whole—so Chopper

could give them his most fearsome doctorly stare. “You can tell us while I’m giving you and Sanji your post-encounter check-ups.”

“I’m *fine*.” they both protested, and Nami giggled as she peeled herself away from them just a little more, catching their hands in hers.

“Do it for me?” she asked, batting her eyes at Sanji. “I’ve been *so* worried, and Chopper saying you’re fine would make me feel much better.”

“Anything for you, Nami dear.” Sanji smiled. Usopp rolled his eyes, but didn’t argue as the four of them made their way back to Sunny. The back of the van was one of their most versatile spaces, thanks to Franky and Usopp’s combined ingenuity. There were bunks mounted to the sides, currently folded up against the walls, and mounting points for a hammock set into the roof. Plus the bench seat currently folded down into the floor, Sunny could sleep seven at a time. More, if the people on the floor didn’t mind getting a little cozy. It was cramped, and often stinky, and privacy was non-existent... but it was *safe*, and in the world as it was, that mattered more than anything else.

Currently though, with all the bunks away and boxes lashed in place against the sides, it was their medical centre. Chopper sat the three of them down together, Sanji and Usopp sitting on either side of her, and Nami relaxed a bit as the youngest and most brilliant of their little band began pulling out antiseptic wipes and sterile gauze packs. Chopper was probably a solid 60% of the reason none of them had died yet.

“Sanji, I’d like to look you over first.” Chopper said, and Nami leaned against Usopp’s shoulder, taking in the... unusually clean scent of him. He was sweaty, sure, but he didn’t have that week-old road funk the rest of them were sporting. Nami made a mental note to find a spot they could stop to bathe in a river or something, and sat up to give Usopp a more critical once-over. He was clean, hair and skin and clothes all.

“Talk.” she said, and Usopp gave a sheepish little chuckle.

"Would you believe I was abducted by aliens?"

"If only." Chopper sighed, expertly ducking Sanji's retaliatory kick at the perceived slight.

"Almost." Nami muttered, drawing skeptical looks from Sanji and Chopper both. "Just, tell the story." she gestured vaguely with her hand, and Usopp launched into the tale with his typical gusto. It was just as fantastical as any of the made-up stories about his childhood before they knew each other, but Nami's eyes kept drifting back to his hair, washed and fully dry. Usopp's hair took even longer than hers to dry, and he hadn't been out long enough to be all the way dry even if he'd been doused somehow right when they left.

"Robin, could you come up here and double check what I'm seeing?" Franky's voice cut through Usopp's meandering story, and Nami went tense where she'd nearly begun to nod off, sandwiched between her boys. There wasn't much that Franky asked for a second opinion on.

"Coming." Robin replied lightly, and boosted herself up on top of the van. "Hm, yes, that does unfortunately seem to be the case." she sighed, and Nami hung her head back with a groan.

"Horde incoming!" Franky bellowed, and Nami imagined she could hear Law and Luffy swearing from where they'd retreated for some damn privacy.

"None of you are in any shape to fight right now." Chopper said firmly, standing and grabbing the handle of the sliding door. "Franky, we're staying in here."

"Five of us should be plenty for this one." Franky said, dropping down and grabbing his gear from where it sat just inside the door. "You kids stay safe, we may need to haul it outta here if there's another wave after this."

Usopp groaned expressively, head hanging back as Chopper slid the door

shut and returned to giving him a check-up. “I did *not* miss this part.” he grumbled.

“Hey, Chopper.” Sanji said as Chopper finished dabbing antiseptic on Usopp’s scraped knuckles. “I get me and Usopp, but why’s Nami staying in here with us?”

“One, to keep you two idiots from doing something stupid trying to protect her.” Chopper said, giving Sanji a deadpan glare, then Usopp. “And two, if we need to peel out, I want two of our three best drivers *guaranteed* in condition to do so.”

“Thanks, Chopper.” Nami murmured, leaning a little more heavily against Sanji. Outside, she could hear Franky and Robin gearing up for a fight. Luffy and Law complaining as they came out to join in the preparations. “Usopp, could you...”

“Of course.” Usopp smiled, and launched right back into his story. And if he was embellishing a little bit more, projecting his voice to fill the van over the sounds of imminent combat... well, Nami had fallen for him for a reason, after all. Sanji laced his fingers between hers, and Nami curled into his side. If she shut her eyes, she could almost pretend they were back in their little shared house just off campus.

Only almost, she wasn’t imaginative enough to make herself believe it even for a little while, but... so long as she had Usopp and Sanji, she could make it through. So long as she had her boys, whatever safety they found could become home. And no matter how messed up the world got around them, no matter the risk to herself, she was going to hold onto both of them as tight as she could. As long as the three of them were alive, she would be theirs, and they would be hers. And whatever dared try to take them from her would find out right quick just how bad of an idea that was.

Count the Days

By: GemmaRose

~~So Luffy did~~ Jinbe says that's not an appropriate way to start a letter.

Hi, Nami. As I write this we've been on the road for two days, which is one and a half days of missing Sanji's cooking. Anyways, Luffy did the dumbest thing today. He's telling me right now that we've seen him do dumber, but honestly that's a pretty high bar to clear. Anyways, we ran into some fae on the road and Luffy just. Went up and started chatting with them? Somehow we got out of it without me having to put cold steel in the bastards, but I wish you'd been there. You're the only one of our cohort with half a chance of talking Luffy out of anything. Well, maybe not half, Luffy is Luffy after all. But still. Miss you, hope nobody's giving you trouble while we're gone.

Still on the road, now four days in. Jinbe says we're not even halfway there. I hate to think of how long we'll be without you and Sanji. Almost a month, unless we cut this visit short. And don't tell the curly idiot I said that, he'd never let me live it down. If he asks, Luffy is whining about missing his food.

Our favourite idiot is currently lying on top of me like the unreasonably heavy noodle man he is, and wants you to know he absolutely isn't whining, he's complaining, and also that anyone

would miss Sanji's food because Sanji is the best cook ever. You know, the usual. He's being super whiny about it though.

Anyways, Luffy wandered off after we made camp at the edge of a hotspot and came back half an hour later with a dead gryphon which was big enough it must've been the source of the damn thing. I still don't get how he can do that, but if it helps the hotspots normalize, all the better. Jinbe is keeping it turning over the fire as I write this. Aaand now he says it's my turn.

Five days, halfway there! That bridge on your map wasn't there anymore, Jinbe thinks it must've washed away in that storm that passed through just before we left. We had to detour half an hour upstream to ford it, it's still so swollen from the rain. You would know why, I'm sure. You might even be able to tell me when we get home. I just worry that it will stop this letter from reaching you, if the next mailman is on foot.

Camp tonight is small and damp. Jinbe had to use his magic to push the water out of the wood we gathered before it would light, and since he can't pull water out our bedrolls are all sitting in mud. My boots are soaked too, and I didn't bring any of my leather care stuff so I can't even ask Jinbe to speed-dry them. And before you go mocking me to Sanji, who I'm sure is sitting near enough

for you to read this out to, I did take them off before we forded the river.

When we were almost across, Luffy stepped on some big dumb fish, which knocked him over when it swam off. I chucked most of my shit onto shore, but my boots fell short. Sheer luck they caught on a tree root and didn't get swept away. We didn't even catch the damn fish to eat it, which Luffy claims would be the appropriate revenge.

He's going into a tangent about gators now, specifically how tasty they are and how they kept trying to eat him. We should ask Sabo about this next time he visits, Sanji could get some recipe ideas I'm sure. Hell, Luffy's making me hungry for gator. Better than being mopey about cram for dinner like he was when I started writing.

Luffy says hi, and that he misses you too. I think he's got some plans for when we get back, but who knows if he'll remember them that long.

Day seven. We pushed past sundown and got to that inn on the map you drew. Upside to being Important People now, and also Usopp and Robin planning this trip in advance, they had a room and

food ready for us. Thank those two for me, will you? It's no Sanji cooking, but anything is better than cram. Which we had to eat again last night in a cold camp because someone pissed off a bunch of bandits by leaving their leader knocked out in the road and by the time we beat them up it was too dark to go get firewood.

We're fine, by the way. It was a decent workout, but nothing dangerous. I bet you could've soloed them, even. It's nice to have an actual desk to sit at while I write, though it does mean Luffy is whining about not being able to cuddle. Being back on the road hasn't helped his patience any, of course.

Honestly, it's wearing mine down too. This is the first privacy Luffy and I have had since we left, Luffy is whining at me right now to stop writing and come join him, and all I can think of is being back home with you and Sanji. The bed the inn set up for us isn't even big enough to fit all four of us. I want to hold you again so badly it aches, I even miss Sanji, even though it seems like he's all pokey bits and hard angles when we cuddle. Tell him that, he won't kick you in the head like he would me.

Hi Nami its Luffy. Miss u lots. Gonna drag Zoro to bed now + mail this in the mornin bye!

Dear Zoro:

This is how you properly address a letter, you absolute dork. And that's why you're Luffy's guard/arm candy, and I'm the one who gets left behind to run this damn place while Luffy visits our allies. I read your letter out loud to Sanji, and also the rest of the crew. We all knew you were a sweetheart already, you doofus. Franky is already drafting plans for a collapsible smokehouse, because of course he is.

Regarding the bridge, Franky will be headed out to build a replacement in a few days. Sanji needs to prepare travel sodas for him, but it'll be intact for your return trip. And you're right, I do know why the river was still so high. There was a storm system passing upstream at the time. Chopper is glad Luffy didn't catch anything from his dunk, and Brook is threatening to compose a ballad about your lucky boots.

I miss you and Luffy too. If these trips become a regular thing, we should ask Franky to build us a second, smaller bed. And before you or Luffy complain, may I remind you how much space we have, and how empty the big bed feels with just me and Sanji in it. I wish I could come with, but Robin and Usopp are better advisors than leaders. Maybe one day we could leave Jinbe in charge, and the four of us go on a trip? He's about the only one of the crew I trust to keep things running smoothly while we're gone, especially if we bring Usopp and Kaya too.

Yours, faithfully, Nami.

Letters to Nami

CHAPTER 2:
EAST BLUE

EINMEEGIE
24

A kiss by Sunlight

By: Katia_Anyway

Find part 2 in the Letters to Nami NSFW Add-on!

Sham didn't like Usopp's friends.

To be entirely honest, she didn't like Usopp either. The little barnacle wouldn't leave their target alone, which was a thorn in her Captain's plan. He was manageable, though. A stern look, a reminder that "Miss Kaya needs to rest" and he was on his way. Most of the time they managed to catch him before he even got a glimpse of the girl.

But his new friends… Sham didn't like them one bit. There was something to them… They weren't your regular tourists. The woman especially, observed the manor's trinkets a little too closely, checked the exits and locks as if she was memorizing them and plotting an escape route.

That's when Sham realized two things. First, the other two were idiots. Just as stupid as Usopp, if not as easily deterred. They could be tricked and rid off. The woman, however, Nami, she called herself, was the real brain of the group. Second, Sham knew her.

She walked in front of one of the windows, in one of the darker hallways, and the light illuminated her face just so. Sham jolted, overtaken with an emotion so quick she didn't have time to recognize it. She knew her. She knew that face. Where had she seen that face before?

The question remained on her mind as Kaya invited the four pests to stay the night, then offered them free access to the dressing room. Sham had to stop herself from hissing when she had to leave them alone in there. This was her treasure! Sure, she'd tried on the clothes there and most things didn't fit her, made for women taller and thinner than her, but still. She would sell what she didn't like and have the rest modified to fit her better. She would keep the jewelry too, have the tacky stuff melted and wear the rest like a queen. Anyhow, this treasure belonged to her! She'd worked too hard to get her hands on it. She could already tell the little rascals would paw at everything, probably even steal some things. She wanted to rip their throats out just thinking about it.

Instead, she nodded politely to Miss Kaya and went to figure out a dinner for four more people.

She was wearing the red kimono.

Sham felt her hands flexing, her claws ready to rip through fabric.

She'd just entered the cocktail room, bringing the drunkard his the-gods-knew-how-many bottle of the day. At this rate, he would drink the cellar dry before they managed to get rid of him. If only that made him sloppier and easier to trick. But no, the man looked like he wasn't getting any drunker than he was when he'd first come in that day.

But the second she caught glimpse of the red fabric, she almost dropped the bottle. The same jolt from earlier overtook her, more intense the second time. The woman, Nami, was wearing the red kimono. Sham had planned to have it unsewed to keep the fabric, maybe turn it into another piece of clothing. But on the woman, it didn't need a single modification. She looked like the article belonged to her, like it was tailored just for her. Even Kaya said so, when she saw her in the dress, almost gifting it to her right there.

How had she managed to claim it for herself so easily? Sham wanted to rip it off her. Maybe even teach her what happened when you stole from a pirate. Many time had Sham fantasized about teaching 'Miss' Kaya her place. Teaching her that you don't order a pirate around. But never had she felt the urge to tie her up and give her *something* to busy her mouth with. Now she wanted to do just that to Nami.

A look from her Captain kept her in check, though. Now was not the time.

Later. Soon. Soon, Sham repeated to herself like a mantra.

The mantra worked up until she watched Nami try to seduce Merry and had to leave the room to avoid going into a murderous frenzy.

This night was a complete mess.

Of course the little rascal had to climb on the table and announce that he was a pirate, and of course Kaya had to be all nice and understanding and let them stay. And then of course marines had to show up. So now they had to clean the mess.

They managed to get rid of Merry and of the drunkard swiftly, and, even though Usopp escaped and warned the marines, Captain Kuro managed to make the marines drop the matter and leave, getting rid of the strawhat boy while he was at it. But now they would need to take care of Kaya before Usopp warned her, because it would be a little more difficult to convince *her* that Usopp was lying.

That and they needed to get rid of the woman, Nami. She was way less stupid than her friends, and would be a lot harder to trick.

Which meant Sham would have to kill her, she thought gleefully as she changed into her fighting clothes. She'd missed the shorts and comfortable shoes. The ears and bell choker made her feel like herself again, like a Black Cat Pirate.

Captain Kuro used the security system of the manor and the trap closed around their prey. Then they split up, going on the hunt. Sham was having the time of her life, prancing around in the corridors, not having to make herself small, to make herself quiet, to be quick on her way from one task to the other. Finally, she could enjoy the halls, admire the trinkets, expensive useless things that were worth more than her monthly salary as a

maid. Soon, this would all be hers. Or at least a third of it. But no one would fight her over a few trinkets when there was so much wealth to go around. Especially once the Captain inherited the shipyard.

Speaking of trinkets, it seemed she was right earlier, to be suspicious of Nami's interest in them. Sham turned around a corner and there she was, balancing a baton under her arm, while she filled a pillowcase with everything she found on a low table. A silk pillowcase. Sham couldn't wait to sleep on one for real. It was said that they made your skin and hair really soft. She didn't know if it was true, the poison in Kaya's veins made such damage that neither her hair nor skin were ever soft.

It didn't matter right now. Right now, she had a thief to get rid of.

"May I help you, Miss?" She let her voice resonate in the hallway, making Nami flinch and drop her bounty. "The pillowcase doesn't seem like the best place to hide your stolen goods, may I instead offer you a bag?"

Nami turned to her, and Sham showed her her most threatening smile. Nami didn't notice it, though, too busy looking Sham up and down, her eyes and mouth wide open. Sham squirmed under her gaze.

"What!?" She showed teeth, self conscious. Was something wrong with her shorts? Nami was staring at them. Sham wouldn't look to check, this could be a trick.

"Well," Nami wet her lips, her pink tongue poking out and attracting Sham's attention a little too much. "The maid outfit *really* doesn't do your figure justice. The shorts, however…" She whistled low in her throat, the way Sham had seen some creeps do when they wanted to 'compliment' a woman.

Sham hissed. "Stop making fun of me!"

Nami looked Sham in the eyes, her gaze heated, no hint of mirth there. She walked closer, slow, like she expected Sham to bolt. Sham didn't move an inch, refusing to give her the satisfaction, not even when Nami extended a finger to Sham's throat.

The bell around Sham's neck rang softly.

"I really like this choker." Nami whispered, her voice husky.

Sham felt the same jolt of emotion from earlier, even more intense, shaking her entire body. Then, Nami's face moved just so in the dim light and it hit Sham. She knew where she'd seen that face before. She swung with the mop she'd taken with her to use as weapon, going for Nami's abdomen. The woman jumped back, swiftly avoiding the hit.

"You are the Cat Burglar." Sham's face distorted in anger and disgust.

Nami gasped, looked around, checking the hallways as if to make sure no one heard Sham's accusation. Sham didn't care, she pushed forward.

"I knew I recognized your face, I just didn't know *where* we could have met before. Now I remember, I saw you on wanted posters." Sham showed her claws, ready to use them to rip through Nami, the one who stole her crew's moniker. "I've always hated you. How dare you call yourself a cat? Don't you know there's only room for one cat crew in the East Blue?"

"I don't know what you're talking about." Nami's voice shook. She knew exactly what Sham was talking about.

"And now you try to steal my treasure?" Sham gestured to the pillowcase that was slowly spilling on the floor. "I'll teach you a lesson."

Sham attacked first, but Nami was quick to escape and retaliate. Their

weapons clashed, Nami's baton hitting the middle of Sham's mop handle. The force of the hit broke Sham's mop in two and she had to jump back to avoid being hit herself. Her mouth fell open in disbelief. How the fuck…

Nami smirked at the damage she'd done, putting her baton down and leaning against it. Whether that was a mocking or flirtatious stance, Sham didn't care. Rage overtook her every fiber and she swung.

The mop whacked Nami straight in the face and she made a squeaking noise. An adorable squeaking noise. It shouldn't have distracted Sham…

It did distract her. She didn't notice the way Nami swiped horizontally, hitting Sham at the back of her knees and making her fall over.

Before she knew it, she was on her back, Nami sitting on top of her, trapping her hands over her head with her baton. Sham struggled but nothing seemed to be working. In the end, the only thing she managed to do was hiss threateningly at her. They both knew it was an empty threat. She was trapped.

She stayed there, tense, watching Nami pant over her, waiting for the thief's next move. She realized she was panting too. It had been too long since she last fought.

Nami took advantage of their position to look Sham up and down again.

"Nice…" She whispered, more to herself than to Sham, her pupils strangely dilated.

Sham swallowed, feeling herself shake with something, and she didn't know if it was anger, fear or… She looked at Nami again, the way her hair framed her face, tickling Sham's cheeks when she leaned in closer. Or maybe it was attraction… It had been a while since Sham had had the time to find someone to have fun with.

"What are you going to do with me?" They were so close Sham could feel the puffs of Nami's breath caressing her skin.

"It depends… Will you attack me if I let you go?"

"You bet I will." Sham yowled in Nami's face. She was lying. She had no idea what she would do if Nami let her go. She might stay there, her arms over her head, just to see how Nami would react.

Nami shrugged, unbothered. "Guess there's only one other way."

She dived in.

Sham yelped in surprise, but the sound was muffled. She had a tongue in her mouth. A lovely woman's tongue was in her mouth, teasing her, trying to coax her into kissing back. Sham whined, it really had been too long. Shyly, Sham started kissing back. What else was she supposed to do? It wasn't as if she could do anything else. And she had to admit, she'd been eyeing Nami since she first saw her in the gardens. So, might as well enjoy herself.

One of Nami's hands sneaked between their bodies, slowly caressing over Sham's blazer before lifting it from the bottom. Sham let out a noise, not even sure herself if it was in protestation or encouragement. Was she really going to do this here? In the middle of the hallway?

Nami didn't seem bothered, neither by the setting nor by Sham's noises, fumbling with Sham's shorts one-handed as she kissed her deeper. Sham's brain was starting to fog over. She felt a pull at her waist, it only lasted a few seconds. She didn't have time to understand what was going on that Nami's hand left her shorts and went to reposition Sham's arms, trapping her wrists together with one hand, while the other kept the baton in place.

Then, Nami pulled back, standing up. Sham let out a sound of protest.

Was it over already? She tried to follow Nami up, to pull her back. No way was she leaving just like that! But something pulled back against her wrists. Nami smirked down at her.

Sham looked at her wrists, confused, until she saw… her own belt, trapping her hands together, and tied at the other end around the leg of one of the decorative tables. Those tables were screwed into the floor. Sham pulled again, harder, but she knew she was trapped. She'd have to break the table or unscrew it to get away.

"Well, it's been a pleasure, Kitty." Nami winked salaciously, licking her lips as if trying to enjoy Sham's flavor just a little while longer. "But if you'll excuse me, I've got a damsel in distress to rescue and a crew of dumbasses to find. Hope I see you again one of these days!" She waved as she rushed down the hallway.

Sham raged. "Hey! Come back! You can't leave me here!"

Nami disappeared and Sham stayed there, her head still spinning in whiplash.

As she struggled to untie her belt and free herself, she found that she really wanted to see Nami again. And she had no idea what she wanted to do to her more. Kill her or kiss her again.

Letters to Nami

CHAPTER 3:

GRAND LINE

Alright sis SPILL on this dude! He says you're just friends, but he spent forever looking for "the best gift" to send you. I mean, the keychain is cute and all, but **not** worth missing the second set of Living Dread. He said he met you in Alabasta? That's a desert island, right? It's kinda hard to imagine such a place, so you'll have to tell me all about it in your next letter. And lemme know if you two are dating! Cuz if you're not, then I'll waste no time in snapping him up!

Nojiko

Nami

Straw Hat Pirates

Hey, hey Miss Kitty!

I was just chilling at the Broken Record Music Festival when I ran into your sister! I mean, what are the odds right? She's pretty cool and we swapped some stories. Anyway, I got you this fun keychain! Please don't sell this one, ok? It's generic enough that the resale value isn't worth much. Anyway, it made me think of you in cat form—if that makes sense? Wish you were here to rock out with me.

Ace

Nami of the Straw Hats

Grand Line Seas

ACE
A
NEKO

Caught in the Spider's Web

By: WonderGarden

"Well, what's done is done," Nami said to herself as the cart sped away, leaving her stranded.

The driver wouldn't be coming back after Nami had unsuccessfully tried to snare him into taking her to either Nanohana or Tamarisk for free. At least he was kind enough to drop her in a nearby town instead of abandoning her in the middle of the desert.

Anything was better than facing the wrath of the Royal Guard, who insisted time and time again that—even though the Straw Hat crew were long-time friends and allies to the Kingdom of Alabasta—it was gravely frowned upon for the Queen to have a heavily-rumored illicit affair with a pirate.

Ah, all clouds had a silver lining. At least the sex was great and her map of the world kept expanding with her travels. Nami decided not to wallow on things that were out of her control, and instead she should focus on her next course of action: how to get the hell out of there before Pell and Chaka found her.

Revising the map she took from Igaram's desk before she made a hasty escape through the window, she confirmed the name of the town was Mezcal Haven, named after the hallucinogenic cacti that grew in abundance around that side of the Sandora River. The map, which seemed to be of the Igaram's personal use, had scribblings around the most important towns and cities that had been reconstructed and flourishing for the past twenty years. Mezcal Haven, however, had little to no annotations around it. The few lines it had were faded, as if they had been written a long time ago.

Newfound oasis town. Nurtured by the river's growth during the rainy season. Had run dry after the Dance Powder Incident. Displaced citizens returning and reconstructing.

Reconstructing seemed like an understatement, though. She checked the map again to confirm that Igaram had indeed written it down as a mere 'oasis town' rather than a prosperous metropolis that was bolstered with luxury. The city before her, though not as grandiose as Alubarna, was nothing short of marvelous.

She walked through the town's gates, craning her neck upwards as she inspected the exuberant architecture. In some parts, it resembled the buildings in the capital, and in others those of quirky places Nami had visited many years in the past like Whiskey Peak and the now abandoned Rain Diners. In fact, it took most of its stylistic choices from the memory of that old casino that once upon a lifetime, a crime lord and Nami's actual crewmate had taken as their base of operations.

Nami urgently needed supplies before she got out of the kingdom. She had barged out of the palace without any food or water, only carrying the bag on her back, a stolen map, and a kiss farewell from her beloved queen. Her priority was to gather (steal) as many things as she could possibly need for her trip before heading back home. A little sightseeing wouldn't hurt anybody, though. Besides, the best place to pickpocket some money was, as always, the public plaza. People gathered around, markets usually abounded with travelers, and most customers were always distracted with their purchases to notice a few coins missing.

To anybody's surprise, the town was beautifully decorated with flowers and golden motifs. The main plaza harbored many shops and street vendors going about their day to day. However, right in the middle of town was a large, elegant four-storey building with a light-up sign that read 'Spiders Café and Hotel'.

Huh. The name sure sounds familiar…

Shrugging off her concerns, Nami removed her sunglasses, placing them atop of her head, and made her way inside. If she flirted her way through,

she was certain a distracted bellboy would hand her the keys to an empty room for the night. If she played her cards right, she could even get a free meal and a few rations. Now, if she wanted to earn herself a free trip to the port, she'd have to get a little cheeky. Nami smirked, unbuttoning a few buttons off her shirt, feeling confident in her own skills to swindle her way into an easy trip.

Oh, she couldn't be more wrong.

The minute Nami set a foot inside the establishment, she knew she'd screwed up. The welcoming ring of a bell above the door announced her arrival, and she was greeted by three enthusiastic female voices. However, as soon as Nami traced the sound of each voice to a face, she recognized *them*. The years had been kind to the three women, who had been alienated from a life in organized crime for the past two decades and were no longer under the constant stress of blown-out covers, imminent danger and life-threatening missions.

The youngest of the three, who must have been in her early thirties at the moment, looked like she had continued her artistic education and had now become a professional artist. She was currently decorating the wall behind the reception desk. Her auburn hair, still braided behind her head, was splattered with dots of paint just like her working overalls. She glanced in Nami's direction for a split second, recognizing her but ultimately caring little about the intermission. The young woman returned her full attention to her painting and silently continued with her work.

Serving tables with an amicable smile was the blonde beauty whose abilities allowed her to change her weight at will, and who had almost squashed Nami to death ages ago. She still had a perfect hourglass figure, but the curves around her waist and hips were softer, though it didn't discourage her from wearing a short, tight dress. In fact, she looked even better than when Nami had first met her. Were she not in imminent

danger, trapped inside her former enemies' hideaway, she'd have probably tried to talk her up.

Mikita had greeted her with a jovial 'welcome!', but as soon as her teal-colored eyes landed on Nami, she stopped dead in her tracks, almost dropping her tray in the process. The navigator easily recognized her hostility, as Mikita had taken a step back and was readying herself to pounce.

Retreat would be a better option. There were too many customers at the café, not to mention other employees that would be endangered if Nami decided to confront the Baroque Works ex-agents. Mikita read her like a book, though, noticing she was planning to escape.

"Don't let her out, Lassoo!" Mikita ordered a very old and funny-looking dog, who slumped its heavy body towards the door to block the exit.

Nami had initially believed it was wearing some sort of weird backpack, until she noticed that, *no*, the dog's body had a war tank on its ribcage.

Usopp hadn't been lying back then, huh?

Shaking her head and bringing herself back into reality, Nami reached out for her Clima-Tact, currently strapped to her hip. If she was careful enough, she could knock out her enemies with a single spark from Zeus without compromising the bystanders. Then again, the weather in the desert was not favorable for storm-based abilities that required humidity and water to work properly. Things could backfire easily, but she'd deal with the consequences later.

"Don't you dare jump on the lobby, Miki, the tiles were expensive," said the gorgeous bartender behind the counter, who Nami had also recognized as soon as she walked inside. While her wavy, dark blue hair had been streaked with silver strands, she still wore it natural and down her

shoulders. Although she no longer wore that very, very revealing latex outfit, she still wore a distracting open blouse that left little to the imagination.

At least she wasn't pinning Nami to the wall this time. Literally pinning her, like a butterfly to a cork board, given her dangerous abilities to turn any part of her body into deadly spikes.

"But Zala!" Mikita said, turning around to face the older woman. "You do recognize who this is?"

"Of course I do," Zala said, resting her face on the palm of her hand, staring at Nami with curious, deep emerald green eyes. "How could I ever forget a face like that?"

Nami flinched, her fingers dancing on the leather strap that kept the Clima-Tact attached to her hip. While she felt a clearly threatening aura coming from the blonde woman, she could not read whatever lay behind Zala's mischievous smile. It all remained in a stand-still until Marianne intervened, with her eyes still glued to the mural she had in front of her as her splattered brush ran across a large area of the wall. With words that now were as wise as her years, she said:

"No one is rich enough to buy back their past," she looked at Nami for a brief second before returning to her work. "What happened, happened. We're who we are, and the world is what it is."

As if caught by a spell, Nami's shoulders relaxed. Mikita's did too, and with a loud *'hmpf!'* she returned to her tables, retrieving her tray and fallen cutlery. Marianne's eyes remained glued to her mural, ignoring the situation altogether from that point onwards. Zala, kept her sight on Nami, waiting for her to approach the reception desk.

"I think I'll take my lunch break now, girls," she said with a soft sigh, and made a gesture for Nami to join her in the employee's private room.

Uncertain, the navigator took a couple of careful steps before following behind her. The room was a bit cramped with the employee's belongings and a small, elegant wooden table in the center, where Nami could picture the three women—and possibly every other ex-Baroque Works agent that came to visit— having a little chat there. Zala retrieved some food from the fridge, gesturing for Nami to grab a bite from her plate if she wanted. Anxious that it might be poisoned, Nami refused by shaking her head. Zala chuckled and sat before the younger woman, waiting patiently for her to take a seat.

"I won't bite, I swear."

"You might as well stab me," Nami retorted with a frown. Thankfully, she was way more prepared to defend herself now that she'd been all those years ago. She was certain that she'd improved her fighting abilities so much more than the former assassin had..

"You heard Mari," Zala said with a shrug, sounding slightly annoyed, perhaps even a little hurt. "What's past is past. I've left those days behind me, and I'm certain you've done just the same, Miss Navigator."

Nami frowned, not certain if she could call her days as a pirate as something she'd left behind. After all, she was still an essential member of the most infamous pirate crew in the world to this very day. Still, she relented and took a seat in front of the blue-haired beauty, waiting patiently for her to break the ice. Zala smirked, pinching a raw tomato from her plate with one of her fingers instead of using a fork.

"I think … and feel free to correct me if I'm mistaken," Zala started, sipping some water and putting down her glass, then staring straight into

Nami's eyes, "that if we've met in any other situation, we might have gotten along quite nicely."

"What makes you think that?"

"Come on," Zala said with a sarcastic undertone. She removed a stray lock from her hair and leaned down a bit, resting her face on the palm of her hand. With a smirk, she added: "Let's not pretend we're not on the same wavelength."

Lesbians, you mean, Nami thought, returning the smirk. Now that they were speaking the same language, Nami felt a little bit more at ease. Flirting was something that came naturally to her, thus playing along when her life wasn't on the line couldn't be so hard.

"Now, now," Nami said, leaning in on her elbows just a little bit, and accepting a slice of apple directly from Zala's hand. "You should have started with *that*."

How To Win Love And Affection With Pumpkin Pies

By: Clown

Heso Nami!

It's Conis, from Skypiea, if you didn't already guess!

Oh that sounded so stupid, I'm sorry! I've never really had a penpal before, so this is a little new for me. I hope this all got to you safely, the South Birds are strong and hardy creatures, but it's still a little scary sending them out of the sky islands! The South Bird that is (hopefully) with you right now is named Pumpkin, and she's a *big* fan of head scratches. She's a new addition to our family, she followed my father home from Upper Yard, and she just didn't leave! Her and Su are getting along well, which is nice, I was almost expecting them to get into a foxfight when she stole some food ...

That reminds me, Su misses you as well! She still wears that little shell necklace you made for her around her neck, sort of like a collar. Which also, *also* reminds me, I've made a little necklace out of some of the rocks and shells I found at the Upper Yard, so you can give it to the raccoon dog on your crew!

I do hope everything is going well for you and your crew, Nami. It's so strange how the house feels empty without all of you in here now, and I most certainly miss your cook's meals, please give him my compliments.

So, I'm not too sure what I'm doing with this letter ... I guess it was really just something to say hi, and reach out again! You don't have to reply if you don't want to–just send Pumpkin back if you could!

Sincerely, Conis!

P.S. I know I didn't really get a chance before you left, but I'm going to say it now–I think you're pretty! In a friendly way, of course! Unless, if–nevermind!

Conis! Long time no see and no talk, I guess!

Pumpkin is an absolute sweetie, she was spoiled rotten for the couple of days she stayed on board to rest up before the trip back up to Skypiea. Luffy **did** try to eat her, but please don't worry about that.

And thank you so much for the pumpkin you sent with Pumpkin! Sanji made a pie with it, and I've attached the recipe to this letter. He did write something else as well, but I took a look at it and threw it in the bin. Sorry, but I didn't think you'd exactly appreciate his love letter.

Don't worry about being awkward, by the way. Writing something down is a whole different story than saying it out loud.

Do you get News Coo up in Skypiea? Wait, stupid question, you probably don't. Let me just give you the rundown on what's been happening with the crew anyway, they were all pretty excited to see that you'd written to me.

There's a new member of the crew now! His name is Franky, and he's a cyborg and also our shipwright. He's a little eccentric, but he fits in alright. He actually adapted the waver you gave us into a small boat, based on Merry! Merry ... she unfortunately got too damaged after the Knock Up Stream, and everything we'd already gone through, but she's still with us in the waver, I guess. Our new ship, the Thousand Sunny is pretty cool, I'm sure you'd like her.

A lot happened before that though. Unfortunately, we all have bounties now, even if my bounty poster looks really, really hot. There was an entire disaster at Enies Lobby, one of the Marine strongholds, and we're all officially **very** wanted. It's ... it's a lot. It was worth it, at least. Robin is back on the crew—she was breifly suicidal and captured by the government—and Usopp had a moment as well, and put on a mask and

pretended he wasn't himself after this entire thing with Luffy. If you do get newspapers, and see anything about Sogeking, it's pretty obvious that it's him. We're pretending to not know though, so if you send any more letters please don't mention it.

I can't think of anything else, really. We're all relaxing for the moment after that shitshow.

I think that wraps everything up, somewhat? Oh! Chopper likes your necklace, but he isn't a raccoon dog, he's a reindeer, and he's our doctor, just for future reference. Give Su a kiss on the forehead for me, I miss her as well.

Also, you're pretty cute yourself, by the way. :)

I'll be waiting for your next letter,

Nami, xoxo~

Heso Nami!

I love, love, love the pumpkin pie recipe that Sanji sent me! It's delicious, and my father and I have started selling them as a little way to make some extra Extol on the side.

We do get the News Coo up here, but not as frequently as I'd hope–we just got the issue that speaks about Luffy defeating the Warlord in that desert kingdom! He's really got a knack for that, doesn't he?

Speaking of which, we've been doing well without Enel as God around here. Gan Fall has retaken his role as God and some of the Shandians have taken up leadership roles to help him out, and it's honestly been incredible getting to learn about Shandian culture. They've been so kind to us, and I'm actually going to be heading over to the Upper Yard after I send this letter off with Pumpkin.

I wanted to say how deeply sorry I am about the Going Merry. From the little time I spent with your crew, I could see how much she meant to all of you. She wasn't just a ship; she was a member of your family. I hope that, in some way, she'll always sail with you in spirit.

Do let me know how you and the others are doing. Are you safe? Have you encountered any new incredibly terrifying and/or incredibly powerful villains to defeat yet? Ugh, that's silly, knowing Luffy, the answer is probably yes a hundred times over.

Please give my regards to everyone, and I hope that everyone is safe and happy!

Take care, Nami, and know that you always have a friend up here in Skypiea.

Sincerely, Conis!

Hey, Nami!

Pumpkin came back with nothing but a newspaper about what happened in Marineford, and I'm so sorry. I hope this letter gets to you, or at least one of your crew members.

I've given her a little bracelet to take with her, for whoever gets it, I guess.

Stay safe?

Sincerely, Conis.

Conis!

I know you probably sent me another letter, I haven't gotten it, so much has happened.

I'm in the Sky Islands!

Like, actually in the **fucking** Sky Islands!

Kuma (the actual **fucking Warlord**) slapped me all the way up to Weatheria, with all these weird old man weather wizard scientists. I'm so, so, so, **so** sorry I haven't written sooner, I only just saw a South Bird and I remembered, but at least this will get to you sooner than it would have if I was still down in the Grand Line.

Oh my god so much has happened Conis, so much, I don't think I'll be able to fit it on this little bit of paper I managed to get to write this on. This place is crazy as well, there's barely any paper around despite them being researchers! Found this in a cupboard beside some fancy looking drink, it's pretty sweet, I think it's a soda of some kind.

If I get a break from learning about weather-magic-science, I might see if Haredas will be okay with me hijacking a travel bubble thing, and making my way over to Skypiea to say hi, and I can fill you in.

You're the only person who I know will actually be in the same place I left you.

You're really cool, Conis. ~~You can shoot me with a bazooka any day. You can bazooka me. Please.~~ You're a badass. If we do end up meeting up, I want to ~~maybe try girlfriends? Maybe?~~ hang out, maybe try some of your pumpkin pies.

I think that the drink I found in Haredas's cupboard was alcoholic.

Okay, send Pumpkin with the next letter, I've missed her.

~~Love you~~

Byeeee Conis

Heso, Nami!

Oh, how wonderful it is to hear from you again! I was so, *so* worried when Pumpkin came back home without any reply both times I sent you letters.

I'm thrilled to hear you're learning about weather! What an incredible opportunity, even if the circumstances were ... unusual. I can only imagine what sort of things that the people there are studying, but knowing you, by the time you leave Weatheria, you'll probably have mastered the skies themselves. You managed to master driving a waver in less than an afternoon, so weather science should be easy!

Things here in Skypiea are peaceful, but there's never a dull moment, truly. I guess I'll try and sum up what I put in my last letter that you never received!

Gan Fall has been doing a great job as the returning God of Skypiea, and the Shandians are becoming good friends with us. It's been amazing, really, getting to learn about their culture and visiting them in the Upper Yard!

I also wanted to say (again) that I'm so sorry about what happened with the Going Merry, but I'm glad that you have a new ship, even if you're apart from them right now!

Now, about your offer to visit ... You don't know how much it would mean to me to see you again! I've already started imagining what it would be like to share a meal, maybe a slice of pumpkin pie (that I'm really good at making now! I'm even thinking about making a proper business out of it!), and just talk. The idea of showing you Skypiea now that things have settled fills me with so much excitement.

And I know you might have been a little drunk, but I can read what you tried to scribble out and–okay, I like you as well! If you want to date, or something, I'm okay with that!

Ah–Pumpkin is pecking my pen now, sorry about the drops of ink on the paper. Oh, Pumpkin, she'll be so happy to see you again! She's gotten a bit rounder from stealing bits of pumpkin when no one's looking (or even when my father is looking, he's a sucker for her sad baby bird eyes), but she's still the same silly little thing. I'll send her your way with this letter and a small gift I tried to send with her last time.

Take care, Nami. Stay safe, and if you get some free time, please feel free to come back to Skypiea someday soon. You're amazing, and you'll always have a friend here waiting for you.

Sincerely, Conis

Conis!!

I'm so happy Pumpkin found her way to me with your letter! And the bracelet! Conis, it's absolutely beautiful. I haven't taken it off since she arrived. Every time I see it shimmer, I think of you and Skypiea, and it makes me think about—about the crew. I miss them. Thank you so much.

I'm still in Weatheria, and you should have already guessed that I haven't blown anything up! I'm not as stupid as Usopp or Luffy. Though, if I'm being honest, it's probably because the tricky bastards here are keeping such a close eye on me. They're terrified I'll accidentally create a lightning storm or steal their entire life's work or something **...** which, okay, ***did*** happen once, but it was a very ***small*** storm, and I also gave them back most of their stuff!

I've been learning so much about the weather that I didn't know already, stuff about cloud formations and wind currents and how to use them in navigating, even how to manipulate lightning (Luffy's going to lose his ***shit*** when he sees what I can do with this). Even though I miss everyone else, I'm really starting to get a handle on all this, and I know Luffy'll be happy that I'm getting stronger. Just imagine being able to navigate through any storm or even ***create*** one to fend off enemies!

I've been thinking about visiting Skypiea, and the more I think about it, the more I want to make it happen. I don't know when, but I promise you, I'll find a way. And when I do, we'll share that meal, those pies, and all the stories we've been saving for each other.

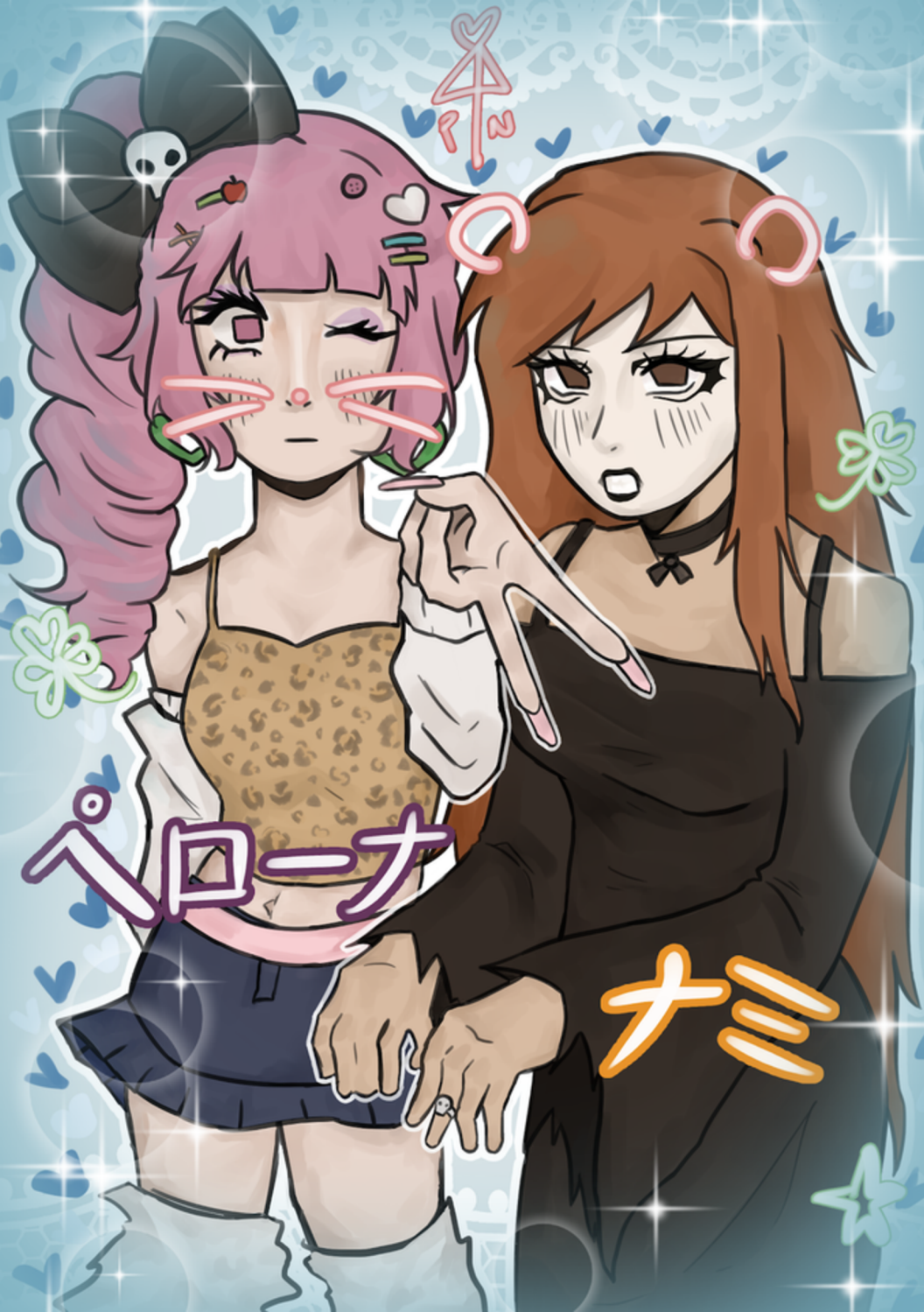
And about being girlfriends, or dating, or whatever, I might have been a little tipsy from whatever is in sky alcohol, but I wasn't kidding. You're so cool, Conis. Brave, kind, and so badass. The way you stood up to Enel and everything you've done since then? I'm in awe of you. Please don't take this the wrong way, but I would have totally made out with you when I saw you after the fight when you were holding that bazooka, good lord.

Pumpkin's pecking at my shoulder, so I guess that means it's time for her to take this letter back to you. I'll send a little gift along with her: it's a piece of Weatheria's sky. It's just a bit of glowing cloud I managed to bottle up during an experiment that Haredas totally fucked up, not me, but it's pretty cool, right? I hope it reminds you of me, just like your bracelet reminds me of you.

Love you, Conis. Until we see each other again, which could be whenever you want—I'm gonna be in the sky islands for another year and a half, at least. ;)

So, see ya!

Nami xoxo~


イヤン
ペローナ
ナミ

BEAST CAVILIER

Of Lullabies and Love Letters

By: vannahfanfics

A pirate couldn't be a picky sleeper: Nami had learned this long ago. One had to catch snatches of rest when and where one could, regardless of their surroundings; light, sound, motion—one had to learn to ignore all such distractions when one committed to a life on the sea, or else find oneself horribly sleep-deprived. Even Nami, as high-maintenance as she could be, had mastered the art of sleeping even when deprived of all possible comforts. Not that she'd had much choice. Growing up in the grasp of Arlong's cruel fist, she hadn't been given many despite the fact that she'd spent the majority of her time on land. As miserable as that period of her life had been, it had ironically prepared her decently well for life as a Straw Hat pirate.

That being said, there remained one singular condition in which Nami found sleep hard to come by, and a condition which she found herself in at present: being unable to hear the waves.

Fourteen nights. For fourteen long, arduous nights, Nami had been trapped in the depths of Zou's tangled jungle and thus cut off from the ocean. Oftentimes, when she found herself in such circumstances, exhaustion or disorientation from an unfamiliar environment prevailed over preference, and Nami could sleep undeterred. As such, the first few days had been bearable enough. However, Nami's system had long since adapted to her present position. Now, even the dizzy debility after an all-night, all-out party with the Minks and Heart Pirates failed to goad her stubborn body into succumbing to the call of sleep. She had collapsed quite eagerly (and quite drunkenly, she would admit) into the mess of blankets within her and Robin's shared tent some hours ago. However, rather than falling into blissful, dreamless sleep as she had hoped, she had just restlessly tossed and turned until the booze had been siphoned from her system, leaving her sober enough to be annoyed that her lullaby was not the gentle ebb and flow of the waves as she was accustomed to, but rather, the heady chaos of a party still very much in full-swing.

The last of the slurred chatter and bawdy laughter and enthusiastic *"Chug,*

]*chug, chug, chug*!s" had faded probably an hour before dawn, but sleep denied Nami yet. She simply longed for the waves, and the wind in the leaves that now echoed around her was simply too poor a substitute to suffice. Though, it certainly tried its best.

Awoooo-sha-sha-sha-shaaaaa… Awooooooo-sha-sha-sha-sha-shaaaaaa… Awooooooo-sha-sha…

Just as the sky began to blush pink in its pre-dawn admiration of the oncoming sun, Nami resolved herself to the fact that sleep was just not going to be had on this particular night. With no more than a forlorn sigh, she extricated herself from the tangled cocoon of blankets that had formed around her and—careful not to wake Robin, who was snoozing quite peacefully in comparison—slipped out of the tent and into the warm, humid morning. It was just as well that she'd decided to get up when she had, she realized, appreciating the gradually lightening hue of the sky. The air was beginning to hum with the first notes of the jungle's daily dawn chorus, and soon, it would be vibrating with the thunderous cacophony of thousands' worth of birdsong, all crashing together in welcome of the sun.

Rubbing her arms as her skin was tickled by the moisture heavy in the air, Nami carefully picked her way around the myriad of inebrieted partygoers who'd presumably elected to heed the call of sleep right where they'd stood and to the nearest table. After using an arm to sweep aside the crumbs and dirty dishes occupying the space, Nami sat down and prepared the small stack of paper and pencil she'd grabbed from her pack before leaving the tent. Now was as good a time as any to go about one of her more discreet habits; it would be some time yet before anyone awoke, so she could do so in peace. However, no sooner than she pressed the fine point of the lead to the smooth page was Nami proven wrong.

"Not even going to wait for the sun to rise? You're a hard worker, Nami-*ya*."

"Damn it, Law!" Nami cursed as she started in fright, then shot a reproachful glare over her shoulder at him. "Don't *scare* me like that!"

Law materialized from the shadows of the jungle treeline, the grin dancing on his lips the same crescent sliver as the moon fading from the sky above. As he strode languidly toward her, he idly tapped the scabbard of his sheathed *ōdachi* against his shoulder. He was thinking—probably about whether or not it was worth the hassle of asking her what she was doing or not.

Nami, in a rare display of open honesty, answered before he even got a chance to ask.

"I'm writing a letter, if you must know," she informed him primly as she turned back around to face the blank parchment.

"A letter? To who?"

Nami let the truth spill from within herself so easily on that misty morning, and no matter how much she'd contemplated it since, she was never quite sure why. Maybe it was the fact that, for a small time, it felt like she and Law were the only two in the world, with all others being ensnared in the soporous tendrils of sleep. Maybe the weariness of lost sleep left her less guarded than usual, more willing to divulge the horrors of her past usually kept so close to her chest. Perhaps it was the nagging thought that Law, of all people, understood—understood what it was like to lose someone. No—to have someone *taken* from you, to be a powerless child watching wide-eyed and horrified as the one you thought of as a parent was snatched away from you in but a mere strangled breath.

"Her name was Belle-mere."

"'Was'?" Law echoed, his voice as soft as the dew-laden grass softly crunching beneath his feet as he walked up behind her.

"Yes, 'was,'" Nami nodded, staring numbly down at the empty paper. "She's… gone. To a place where letters can't be sent."

It was so strange. She would have expected herself to throw her walls up the instant Law got too close to the truth, to let lies roll like honey off her tongue like they so often did. But, for some reason, she felt… catharsis. Like a weight had been lifted from her shoulders by voluntarily letting him into the well-guarded keep that was her bruised and battered heart, to *share* her pain rather than hide it.

"I see," Law murmured, sitting beside her. He didn't sit like she did, facing the table; instead, he turned around to sit with his back against it. So simple an action, probably coming off as a show of preference to those unfamiliar with Law. But Nami knew that it was deeper than that, and that is why she felt that much more at ease when he did so. It was Law's way of acknowledging the weight of the moment they were sharing. He sat beside her, close enough to show that he was truly hearing her beyond just her words; but he sat so casually, leaned back against the table with his gaze not on her, but into the dense jungle behind her, to maintain the sense that there was still space between them.

Such a little thing, but it really was proof that Law and Nami understood one another on a far deeper level than mere looks would imply.

Several moments of comfortable silence passed before Law tentatively asked, "Who was she?"

"She was…" Nami trailed off, searching for words that could describe Belle-mere. It felt like every word in the dictionary fell short of being worthy of the honor of representing the bond she and Nami shared. Yet, she had to say *something*, so after a few seconds of struggling for the perfect word, Nami decided to just let the words flow as they would. "She was my mother, in every way besides blood relation. She raised me… She

provided for me, even going without so I could have. She was strong, and kind, and brave… and she died so that I could live."

And with that, it was like a dam inside Nami had broken. She told him *everything,* not just about the day Arlong invaded. She told him about everything before, and everything after—every sordid detail, right up until the moment she left her village to sail with Luffy. At some point, tears began to stream down her cheeks, and her words became syrupy-thick and hiccupy from her little sobs—but Law paid no mind. He listened, never once interrupting, until Nami finally finished her sorry tale.

He said nothing, at first, only looking at her out of his peripheral vision as she slumped forward a little, exhausted from the effort of such an emotional and lengthy disclosure. He watched her in silence as she collected herself; then, when she sat back up and wiped her eyes and looked at him expectantly, he turned his head to fully face her—

and then, looking almost afraid, he uttered slowly and reluctantly, "I… I'd like to talk about Corazon, if you'll let me." A blush colored his cheeks, and he dropped his gaze almost as instantly as it met Nami's. "I've never told anyone about it, but… I think that maybe it's time that I do."

"You just spent the last half-hour listening to me prattle on about myself," Nami joked lightly, nudging him with her elbow. When his eyes flicked back up to nervously meet hers, she offered him a kind smile. "Of course I'll listen." Now feeling more of her catty, playful self, she then grinned and said with a wink, "I won't even charge you for keeping it a secret!"

"Oh? Do you mean no charge at all, or just no down payment?" Law shot back, managing to smirk despite his obvious anxiety.

"What? Do you not trust me at all, Law?" Nami pouted.

"You give me more reasons I shouldn't than reasons I should," Law

responded playfully. “Is that not your hand trying to slip into my pocket for my wallet?”

Both hands were very clearly resting on her lap, so Nami scoffed in faux affront and whipped said hand up to slap him lightly across the shoulder.

“Rude! You know damn well that if I were trying to pick your pocket, you wouldn’t feel a thing. I’m a professional.” She whipped her hair huffily, then propped her elbow on the table so she could plop her cheek in her palm and fix him in her twinkling gaze. “Now, stop changing the subject. Spill the beans, good doctor.”

Law rolled his eyes so hard that Nami swore he’d be able to see his brain sitting in his thick skull, but spill the beans he did. And what bitter beans they were, just as bitter with the iron bite of blood as Nami’s own. It wasn’t long before the good-natured mood of their banter evaporated into the crisp dawn air, replaced by one of somber sorrow. Law’s retelling of his beloved mentor’s death was not as openly emotional as hers; to the untrained eye, to the unfamiliar stranger, it would even seem cold and matter-of-fact, clearly derived from the necessary poise a doctor must possess to face the unpleasant and sometimes gruesome realities of life and death.

But Nami’s eyes were far from untrained, and Law was far from a stranger. She could look beyond his composure and see what others would not—the twitches of his jaw as he tried not to clench his teeth, the occasionally tremulous inflections in his voice, the haunted look in his eyes as he all but relived that terrible day. Nami could see his pain, just as he no doubt saw hers only moments ago.

And she did not want him to feel alone in that pain, because he was not. So as he stopped short at the climax of the harrowing tall to suck in a deep, shaky breath, Nami reached over to take his hand and give it a tight squeeze. And even after Law had gathered himself enough to finish the

story, she held it… and as they sat there basking in the cathartic wake of the mutual purging, silent and peaceful, she held it still. And Law let her, resisting any attempt to retreat by entwining his fingers with hers.

With her other hand, Nami took up the pencil and wrote her letter. She had written of many things since she had taken up the hobby, the very day she set sail with Luffy and the others. Ups and downs, battles and peacetimes, her dreams and her fears. This time, she wrote of Law—just a rambling stream of consciousness with no end goal or purpose beyond simply telling all that she could think to tell, taking up several sheets of paper in her pleasant maunder. As the sunlight began to spill over the tops of the trees and the birds began to take up their dawn chorus, Nami put the finishing touch on her letter. And it was then that Law finally looked down at the lead-scrawled pages and asked, "You can't send them, but you still write them. Why?"

"I do send them," Nami revealed with a shy smile. "I stand at the front of the boat, or at the edge of the sea, when I'm on an island, and just let the wind take them. And it takes them to Belle-mere… That's what I believe, anyway." It took that admission to finally feel embarrassed, and Nami ducked her head as a blush overtook her cheeks. "Silly, I know…"

"I don't think it's silly at all."

Nami peered through her lashes at Law to find him, in fact, dead serious.

"In fact… Do you have any paper left?"

"Do you want to write a letter for Corazon?" Nami gasped.

"I do," Law nodded, finally letting go of her hand—seemingly oblivious to the hot blush that flashed through Nami's face at the realization that they'd held hands all that time—so he could turn around on the bench and

face the table properly. “And I want to go with you to the shoreline and send it to him.”

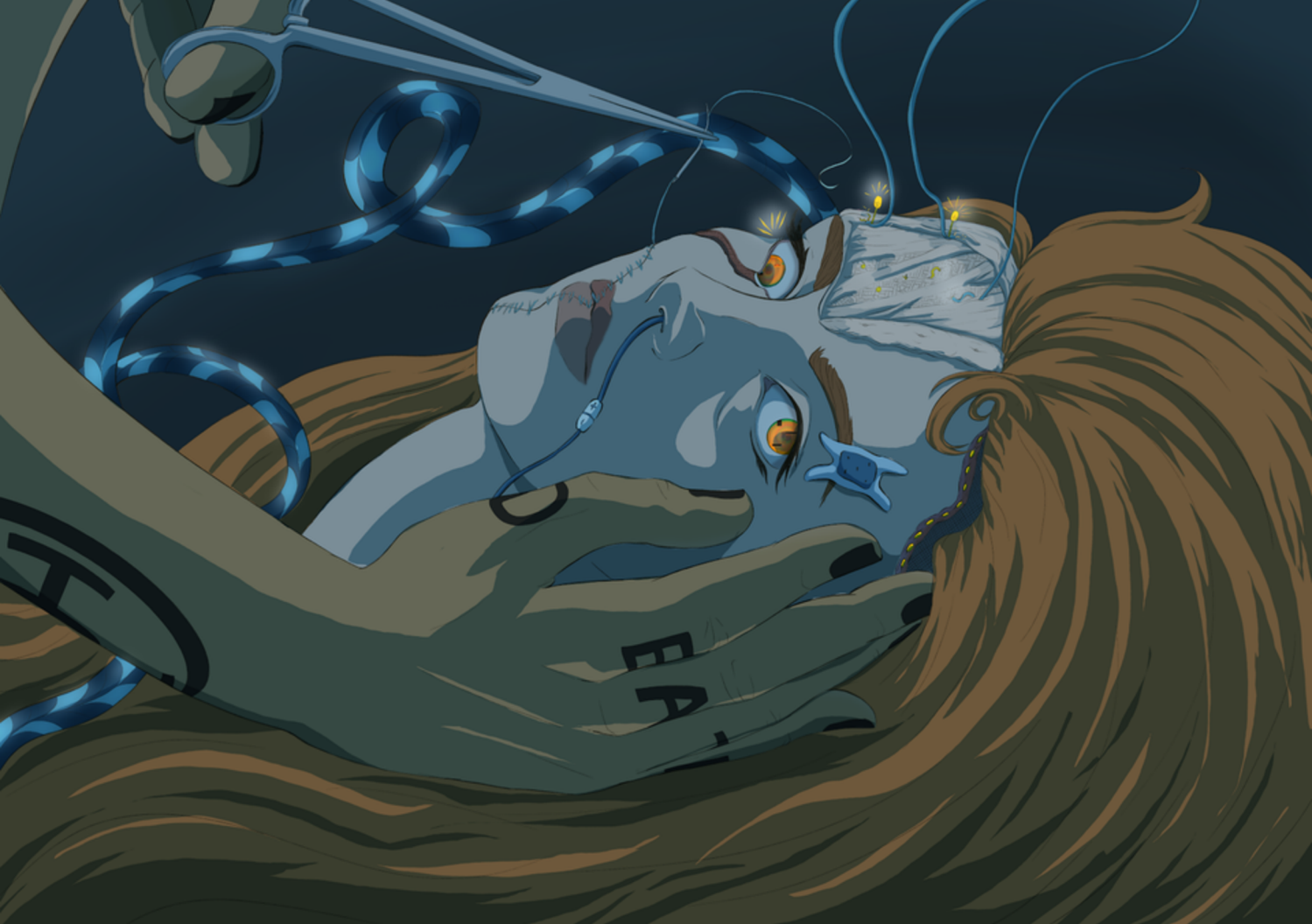
“Yeah?” Nami said with a soft smile, a warm feeling bubbling up inside her like sweet champagne. “I bet he’d like that.” She leafed through the papers to separate her letter from those still blank, then slid them and the pencil over to Law. As she did, she teased, “You’re gonna tell him *allllllllll* about me, right?”

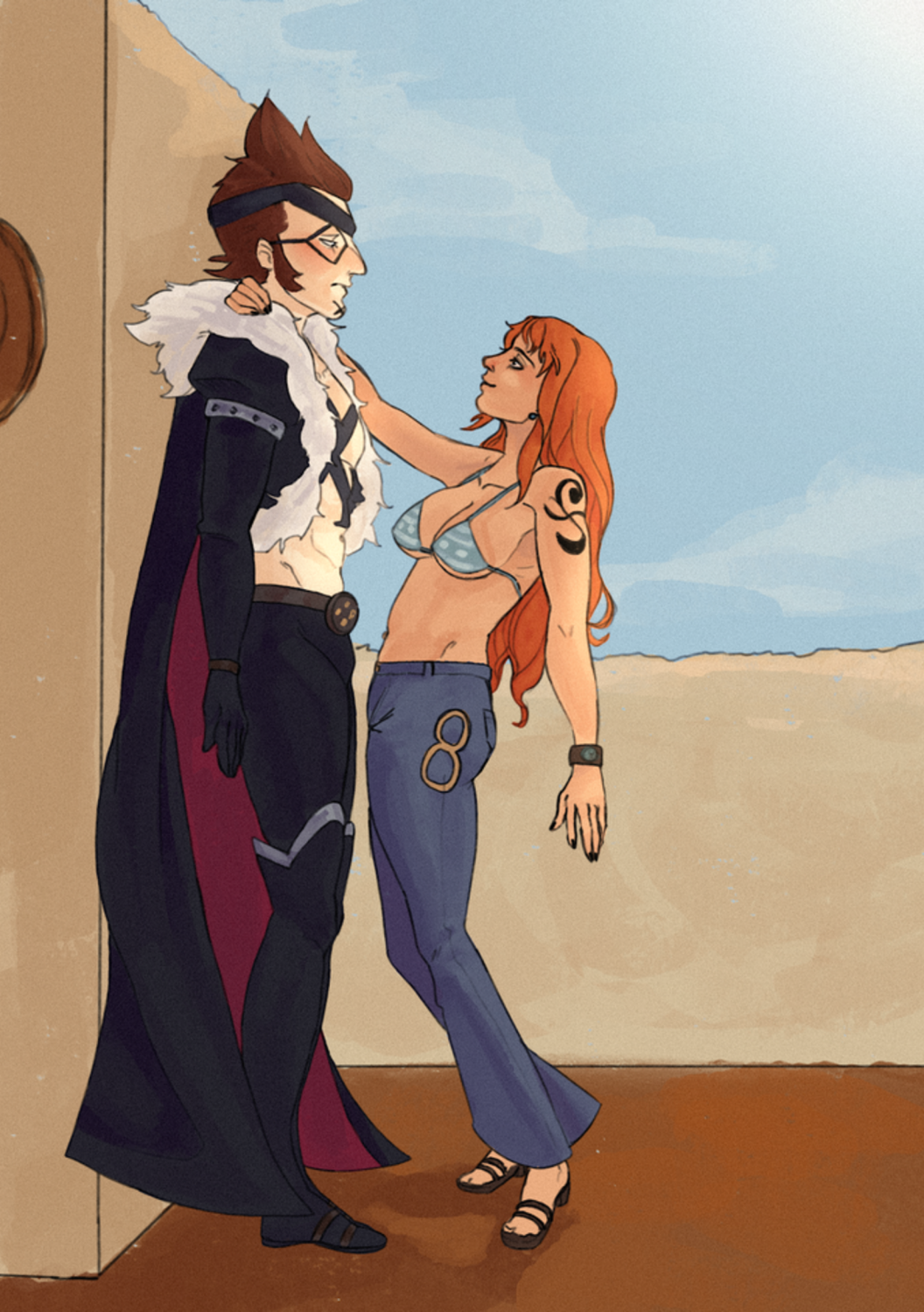
“And what if I do?” Law purred back, admittedly catching Nami off guard. As she flustered in the wake of such a clearly flirty remark, he continued, “It’s only fair, Nami-*ya*. You told Belle-mere all about *me*.”

Nami sure did, and from that day forth, Law’s name became to feature more and more in her letters to Belle-mere. But those are tales that only the wind can tell now, for it bore Nami’s lovingly-penned letters into the horizon, to the great unknown that awaits all… and there is no one better to keep secrets than the sea-kissed breeze, for it takes all it is told in confidence and guards them jealously.

But not all is secret. It is known that Nami and Law walked together that day to the shoreline of Zou, and that they gave their letters to the wind, trusting it to bear the words they had penned to the souls of those they held so dear. It is known that they stood there for quite some time, the surf lapping at their legs and the salt spray tickling their skin, not quite content to relinquish the intimacy of their shared moment for the status quo. It is known that they let the lullaby of the waves soothe their nervous hearts and calm their troubled minds… and it is known that, as if drawn by unseen force, their hands came together once again, fitting into one another’s like puzzle pieces clicking into place.

And it is known that Nami learned something new that day: sometimes, it was worth it for a pirate to be a picky sleeper.

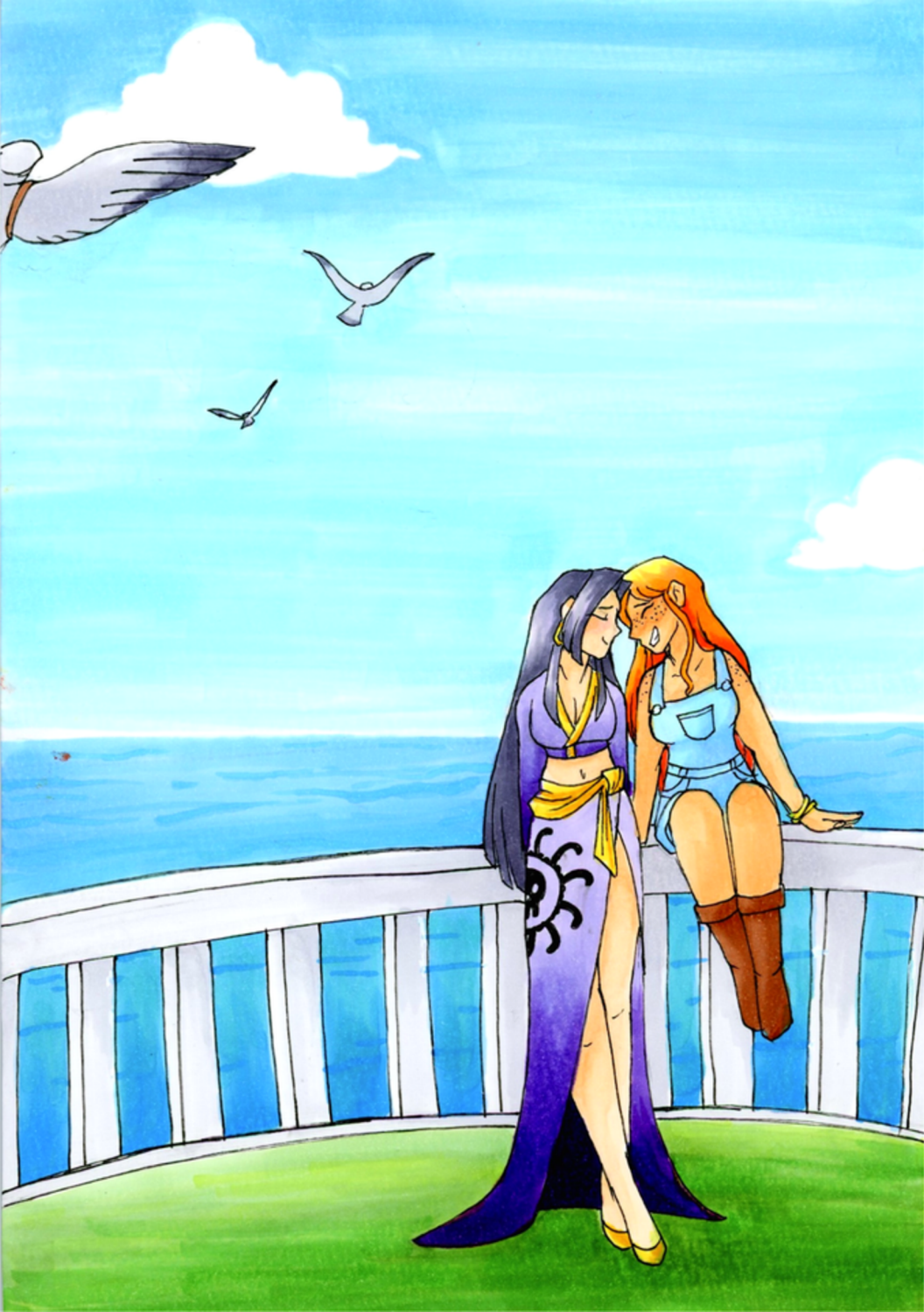




Letters to Nami

CHAPTER 4:

NEW WORLD



people say we're alike
(they say we've got the same hair)

By: anaarlips

It's over as soon as it begins.

Her wrists are numb, pale bands against the tan of her skin when the shackles snap and clatter to the floor. She looks up, eyes sharp and mistrusting, to her liberator.

Liberator. The thought makes her sick, her stomach twisting into something ugly and desiccated.

He bends a knee, hulking blue body cautious and slow as he outstretches a webbed hand. "What's your name, young one?"

Nami spits. It hits his yukata, soaking into the orange fabric.

He pauses and her body stiffens, adrenaline coursing electric through her veins. The exit's blocked by his sheer bulk. *I can't do this again*, she thinks deliriously. *I'm sorry, Mom.*

His palm retracts. She braces herself for a blow, hardening her jaw, refusing to cower. It never comes.

He sighs, eyes weary and sad. *How dare he.* "You are free now. If you get hungry, our cook is coordinating community meals and food redistribution. Dinner will be held in the plaza soon."

Nami watches his figure fade into the sunlight beyond the threshold of Arlong Park. She sits there, impossibly small in its cavernous maw. She can hear sounds outside, the joy and merriment alien and grating.

I wonder if Nojiko is there.

Scarred hands wrap around knobby knees, tucking her legs close to her chest. Her eyes harden, staring a hole into the cold hard ground. Nami

loses track of time, moored in the raging tides of her mind. Slowly, her breath settles into something steady. She lists the facts, cool logic anchoring her.

Arlong is gone. Another pirate, another *fishman*, broke his nose at the root, sending him crashing into the ground. The sight of his defeat coaxed out cowering villagers, whose cheers now echoed off the steep walls of the map room.

Her nails dig into tattooed flesh. The blood is slick under her fingertips, but she barely registers the sting. She doesn't even hear the sound of light approaching footfalls until she feels eyes watching her.

Nami's head snaps up, fingers scrambling for the knife concealed in her twisted legs. Her heart beats manic against her chest, blood rushing in a drowning roar to her ears. Wild amber eyes meet deep blue. A human girl, likely around Nojiko's age, squats down to meet her gaze. She holds a tray, two bowls balanced precariously. They rattle slightly as she flops to the ground. The girl nudges the tray over with a light laugh.

"Take one. I'll take the other."

Nami's eyes narrow. The girl's smile does not fade.

"If I poisoned it, I wouldn't let you choose, right?" She holds her gaze, unwavering and unflinching under the calculating press. Her eyes are honest.

Nami's lips curl. She reaches for a bowl, fingers curling tight against the spoon.

The girl breaks the silence again. “I’m Koala, by the way.”

Nami ignores her. The curry is thick and hearty, the richness cloying on

her tongue. The familiar dull ache of hunger is gone, replaced by a sensation of fullness that roils in her gut. She feels bile rising, liquid hot and stinging her throat. She clutches her stomach, bending over as she vomits, choking back tears.

She feels a hand softly card through her hair, holding back the short locks as she gags. A handkerchief gently presses at the corner of her lip. Nami is too exhausted to fight it.

Nami wakes up clutching her tattoo in a tight grip. This isn't her room in Arlong Park, this isn't her lumpy futon, this isn't her scratchy, coarse blanket. Her eyes are wild, searching the room in a blind panic. Her arms are too light, her shackles are gone.

Her shackles are gone.

"Nami, you're awake. You're with me. It's ok." She feels the familiar curve of callused fingers interlaced with her sweaty palm.

"Nojiko," she rasps.

She's back in her childhood room, where her family once crowded on a single mattress, limbs tangled and bodies warm. The familiarity grounds her enough to realize that there's someone else beside the bed.

"What is *she* doing here," she bites accusingly.

"Koala's staying with us."

"She's one of *them*."

"*They* saved us."

Koala's voice is clear and steady, but the slight tremor in her hand betrays her. "*They* saved *me*."

The sisters freeze, looking up at her as she turns, lifting her shirt to expose her back. At its center, the skin is scarred and raised: branded.

Nami feels nauseous again.

"*This* will be a part of us forever. *This will never heal.*" Her shaking fingers trace the rays of the sun, voice cracking as she speaks. "But someday, *somehow*, someone *will* etch their love in its place."

The silence thickens, the words curdling in her stomach as she *stares.* Yet traitorously, not a single consonant slips through to purge the sensation. Her stomach aches, her throat burns, and her eyes remain transfixed on the curve of ***her*** back.

The shirt limply falls over Koala's skin, concealing the third-degree trauma beneath its soft cotton folds. Its fabric shifts and glides in her wake as she steps through the threshold, the worn wood of the door scraping shut.

"Rest," Nojiko persuades.

Nami's eyes slide shut before she can muster the strength to argue.

It's late when she awakens. A beam of soft light shines from a crack in the roof, setting aglow the fine dust that floats through the air in slow, curling arcs. The door is slightly ajar: she can smell the salt and citrus carried on the late summer evening breeze, the faded curtains billowing in its gentle current. Voices drift and mix: distant laughter and music.

A piece of bread sits on the bedside table. Its golden crust is out of place in this home, a strange contrast against the coarse grain of the repurposed

fruit crate. Beside it, there's a note in penmanship she cannot recognize. The paper is thick, and the neat, sloping ink does not bleed through.

It's easier on the stomach.

More sage advice. Nami sighs, pushing aside lingering annoyance to nibble at the slice. Its quality is foreign on her tongue, but it settles without protest.

Experimentally, Nami flexes her hands. Her wrists and ankles are still tender, but her range of motion is marginally better. She rolls her spine, grimacing at the cracks. She stares at the door. The note. The window.

Without thinking, she swings onto her feet.

The earth is cool beneath her bare toes as she wanders through the grove. The trees blur, the familiar paths of her childhood warping and bending as she drifts on the wind and dying dusk. It's dark when her legs give. Her knee throbs.

She leans against a slender trunk, sliding down to sit between its reaching roots. Nami closes her eyes, listening to lightly rustling leaves and shifting branches overhead. Distantly, she feels the faintest tickle against her leg. With mild curiosity, she opens her eyes to an ant trailing across her skin. She must have diverted their path.

Strangely, she doesn't have the urge to flick it off.

She doesn't know how much time passes, measuring breaths to the pace of ants steadily marching over the bony apex of her bruised shin.

It's dark when she hears footsteps. They pause, settling next to her.

"They don't stop for anyone, huh?"

Nami turns her head.

Koala's lips curl at the seams, eyes sparkling with light amusement as she stares back. She places a crumbling piece of some baked good nearby. An antenna twitches. Suddenly, the stream of insects traverses back over Nami's leg, rushing towards the food.

Nami feels something bubble and curl, and she clutches her stomach. Her lips part as she gasps for breath. She cackles, its force shaking her small frame. Koala wraps an arm around her, tugging her close and steady as the girls burst into a fit of giggles. Nami's lungs burn, her eyes beginning to water as her laughter turns hysterical. She leans into Koala's shoulder, snot dripping onto her shirt as she wheezes. Koala's hand gently moves to curl around her left arm. It's warm.

When Nojiko returns home, the two girls are curled up on the bed, fresh bandages wrapped around Nami's leg. She smiles, sliding under the covers beside them.

Months pass, and Nami remembers how to run.

Her feet pound against the terracotta shingles, her chest straining with giddy glee as she throws a grin over her shoulder. Koala cackles, throwing her a thumbs-up as she leaps across the roof.

"Get those damn kids!" A marine yells, voice strained as he struggles to catch up.

Nami smirks, vaulting to another building and landing neatly on her heeled sandals.

"Already tired? … Are you sure you're a captain?" She sticks her tongue out, wiggling a bulging bag of treasure.

His eyes bulge.

She can hear distant shouting. Across the rooftops, marines groan as they drag their weary bodies up the walls in a clumsy climb.

"C'mon, Nami! Race ya!"

"Coming!" She chirps over shoulder.

A groan.

Nami pauses, tilting her head at the soldier.

His face flushes, caught mid-stretch as he sizes up the ten-foot gap. Surely he doesn't think he can vault across.

"Good luck with that," Nami mocks.

The wind rustles through her hair as she runs. Distantly, she hears a dull thud. A muffled whimper. The shriek of a startled street vendor.

Nami runs, laughter light on her tongue and the pace of her footfall as fast as the wild thrum of her heart.

Koala's at the docks already, arms leaning off the side of the stolen dinghy as she beams up at Nami.

"Line's cast off, hop in!"

Nami tosses the sack, and Koala catches it in a single palm without a glance.

"Nice catch," Nami teases, unfurling the sail and pushing off the dock. In the near distance, marines shout, their feet thundering against the wooden pier.

"Nice throw!"

"Don't let them get away!" A marine reaches, arm stretched long as he fails to grab ahold of the sailboat. The tide sweeps them away out of reach, the rudder expertly maneuvering through the current. The girls burst into laughter, clutching their sides as they watch the soldier lose his footing and tumble into the sea.

Nami smells it first on the wind: a distant storm crackling electric, the ozone faint yet sharp.

It isn't monsoon season.

She glances sidelong at Koala. Her hair's static, all wild and orange. Koala turns, and her eyes widen.

"Nami," she gapes, "your hair!"

"*Your* hair!"

The girls stare at each other for an incredulous moment before bursting into laughter. It was strange enough, the slight resemblance in features they shared. Nami had hit a growth spurt earlier that summer, finally catching up to Koala. It became an endless source of confusion and amusement for the girls. They said they were alike, that they had the same hair; but their reactions were what truly marked them as similar.

Belle-mere once told her that you become the people you surround yourself

with. She sometimes wondered where she started and Koala began.

It's strange, this feeling of grieving for the living.

Nami buries herself in her maps for the first week, refusing visitors. Nojiko practically breaks down her door. After a tense showdown, they come to an agreement: Nami eats what Nojiko makes, and Nojiko stops asking questions.

The lingering hurt and concern in her sister's eyes spoils her appetite. She forces herself to swallow, anyways.

She dreams of giddy laughter, solid warmth, blue eyes creasing at the corners. On the eighth day of waking up face-down in a book and a crick in her neck, she can't decide which is worse: restless nights or cold mornings. The silence seeps like a winter chill into her bones. Koala used to tease her relentlessly for her warm-blooded ways; *As long as it isn't a Fall, Winter, or Spring Island, you'll be fine!*

Was she on a Summer Island like this one?

Nami's lips press into a tight crease.

On the twelfth day, a knock on her door startles Nami out of a poor doze. Before she has time to protest, it swings open, letting in the blinding noon sunshine.

"What the hell!?"

Nojiko tears the windows open, scraping the curtains along the metal rod with a horrifically loud screeching noise. Brusquely, she pushes an envelope into Nami's arms.

Dear Nami,

Bet you've forgotten all about me, huh! Just kidding. It's *so* cold here, you would *hate* it. And my partner is an absolute *idiot*. You'd

The letters start to get blurry. Nami roughly wipes at her eyes.

Her jaw aches that night, yet she still falls asleep with the same grin that's stretched across her face all day. The letter sits on the crate beside her pillow.

Months pass. The stack of letters grows far too tall, so she flips her mother's crate and stores them inside. After all of these years, it still carries traces of tangerine oil.

Nami starts running again.

It's different now, but she missed the adrenaline kick, the dopamine rush from what Koala lovingly refers to as 'resource redistribution'.

These exploits become the subject of dramatization in her letters with perhaps some embellishment, but Koala finds them endlessly entertaining. She encloses little trinkets, small trophies from her adventures.

In a run-down alley catching her breath, a familiar smile catches her eye. She looks up.

Koala grins down at her, daring and roguish from a freshly-plastered wanted poster. She's wearing the bracelet she sent her eight months ago.

The realization floods her with such an overwhelming feeling of warmth that she barely has time to duck out of the way when a cannonball crashes overhead.

The wall collapses, and Nami neatly rolls to her feet, already running.

"There she is! Give it back, you thief!"

Damn it, she's in the open now.

An obnoxious yell overhead stops her in her tracks.

Nami looks up to see something, *someone* careening through the sky towards her. She yelps, dodging to the side as he slams into the ground.

What is up with things almost crashing into her today?

As the dust settles, she prepares herself for a grisly scene. Her jaw drops when a lanky boy simply bounces to his feet, pressing his straw hat firmly in place before cackling.

"Wow, that was really weird!"

The pirates are flabbergasted. Frankly, so is she.

Nami can handle this.

"Ugh, I'm hungry," he whines.

Nami's lips stretch into a smile. "Captain, you came to save me!"

"Huh, who the heck are you?"

The pirates stare.

"Sorry, see ya!" She takes off sprinting.

Behind her, she hears shouts of confusion. Then violence. And then more confusion.

Poor sucker.

Nami clambers up a rooftop, swinging her legs over easily as she surveys potential exit routes to the sea.

"Gum Gum Pistol!"

What the hell?

She looks down. That scrawny kid is somehow still on two feet fighting. He grins, waving at her before his arm stretches horrifically long and slams into the gut of the nearest pirate.

"*What the hell*?"

"Hey bandana girl! Whatcha doin'?"

"What are *you* doing?"

"Fighting, duh." His spare hand lifts to his face. A grubby finger shoves in his nostril to dig. "You're funny! I like you. We're friends."

"We are *not* friends! Who even are you, anyways!?"

His eyes light up. The boy laughs, kicking his leg out to swing into the crotch of another pirate. "I'm Monkey D. Luffy! I'm gonna be the King of the Pirates!"

Nami rolls her eyes. "You wouldn't know a real pirate if it hit you in the face."

"Would too—BLEH!" His retort is cut short as a dismembered hand comes flying out of nowhere and punches him in the face.

Hell no. This is getting weird, and Nami's getting out.

Nami sulks while she writes her letter that night.

Dear Koala,

Nice bounty! Nice jewelry, too. Where'd you get it? Must've been from someone cute and good at wealth redistribution. Anyways. I didn't get a chance to grab your poster because I was being chased by a crazy clown and now I'm stuck with an absolute idiot.

"Nice love letter," a voice drawls over her shoulder. "Dear Koala? You tellin' your girlfriend that you joined the crew?"

It's that stupid swordsman. He's smirking around a bottle of sake.

"It's not a love letter, she's *not* my girlfriend, and I'm not joining your crew!"

Zoro laughs, taking another swig. "For a thief, you suck at lying sometimes."

They enter the Grand Line. The letters continue. On lonely nights, she cards through old paper. They smell like home.

When the crew finds itself dragged into a brewing civil war, Nami runs to her office. The response arrives in days.

As she adjusts her abaya disguise, she addresses the crew. "We're getting supplies, and I'm meeting up with a friend who might help."

"Your girlfr--" Nami promptly elbows Zoro in the ribs.

"Be on your best behavior. Especially you, Luffy." She turns her head to fix a pointed glare at Luffy, but finds herself staring at a void patch of sand. "Where the hell is Luffy!?"

There's a crash. A yell. A deep shout. And then, the thundering footfall of what are undoubtedly Marines chasing some poor idiot.

Nami's head is killing her.

"Hide here and be quiet!" She orders, dragging a panicking Chopper behind a wall. Usopp practically nosedives after them as Sanji gushes about assertive women.

"Get back here, Straw Hat!"

Of course it's *her* poor idiot. She prays that he doesn't blow her cover.

Luffy makes eye contact with her, grinning and waving frantically as he's chased by a burly Marine, who promptly notices her because *he* is not an idiot.

"The rest of the Straw Hat Crew is behind that wall!"

"You need a hand?" A familiar voice calls.

Nami's heart lurches. She whirls around, meeting sparkling blue eyes and a cheshire grin.

"You're taller."

"You're...." Nami's at a loss for words. Somehow, Koala understands. Of course she understands.

They collapse into each other, pulling away when tendrils of smoke and fire curl into the sky. A crow of delight: “Luffy!”

A giddy yell: “Ace!”

Nami rolls her eyes. “That’s my idiot.”

Koala snickers, nodding at a blond boy sprinting towards the scene. “And that’s mine.”

Two twin shrieks pierce through the air: “SABO?”

The girls look at each other in a mirrored deadpan.

"Wanna run?"

Nami's lips curl into a smirk. "Race ya!"

Tales of the World by Sabo the Storywright

By: Emily Fowl

A supplement to the Atlas of the World by the World's Greatest Cartographer and Meteorologist, Catburglar Nami.

It had always been a dream of mine to travel and gather stories from every island around the world. My work had kept me occupied for quite a while[1], but after the dissolution of the World Government, I have decided to join my brother[2] and his crew on their continued journey.

Luffy had been easy to convince, in that he required no convincing at all. The rest of the crew had seemed to take to my presence easily — most had already met me in the aftermath of Dressrossa[3], after I had obtained my brother's fruit[4] — with the sole exception of the navigator and treasurer[5].

It had not occurred to me until much later that evening, that all the griping about the "cost of feeding another mouth" and other such concerns had been merely Nami-san's version of bonding. The berry dropped, no pun intended, when I had offered to pay the difference and received a dismissive "I'll just put it on your credit tab!" in response.

Luffy's swordsman[6] had clasped me on the shoulder when she had said so, offering a commiserating look. "We've all been there," he told me, and I have soon learned that his debt with Nami-san was larger than his current bounty[7].

I would like to say it had been smooth sailing from there. That would have been, however, a lie. I have known exactly what I was signing up for when tagging along with the Strawhats, and that was the wildest Adventure most people wouldn't be even able to dream of.

The following stories are an account of said adventures, as accurate as my recollection allowed. They're written down in chronological order, separated by the section of the Grand Line and the four Blues. It is with

great pleasure that I present this collection to you, dear reader, and hope it offers you a glimpse of what we experienced!

[1] Sabo the Storywright had spent his early life as a Revolutionary; he had reached the position of Chief of Staff (effectively the second-in-command to Dragon the Revolutionary).

[2] The Second Pirate King, Monkey D. Luffy, biological son of Dragon the Revolutionary.

[3] Referencing the 1524 conflict between then-Warlord Doflamingo and allied forces of Monkey D. Luffy and then-Warlord Trafalgar D. Law.

[4] Mera Mera no Mi, previously belonging to Portgas D. “Fire Fist” Ace, famously executed in 1522 due to being the biological son of the First Pirate King, Gold Roger.

[5] The first person to map out the entire world and World’s Greatest Cartographer, Catburglar Nami herself.

[6] The Greatest Swordsman in the World, Roronoa Zoro.

[7] At the time of writing, it had been 1,111,000,000 berries.

Grand Line - Sphinx

Despite a fair number of islands separating Laughtale and Sphinx[8], Luffy had been insistent that it had to be the first stop after his metaphorical crowning. After achieving the dream he had been most vocal about, it had

become a matter of utmost importance to share the news with our dearest brother, seeing as he had been the only one unable to watch Luffy become the Pirate King in person.

There had been, by necessity, some restocking trips in the meantime. One of such trips — visiting an island the crew had already been to on their way through the New World — was when I had approached the crew members for assistance. My first thought was to ask Luffy's swordsman. Zoro however, after hearing my request, directed me towards the cook[9] who, with little hesitance, sent me out to talk with Nami-san.

I had approached her as she was putting the finishing touches on the budget for the day. "Loath as I am to ruin your work," I said upon knocking at the open doors, announcing my presence. "I was wondering if I may request something specific."

Nami-san sighed, although it had not escaped my notice that a small smile was dancing on her lips. Leaning on her hand, she turned towards me, her fiery locks cascading over her shoulder. "What do you need?" She asked.

"Sake," I said simply. "It need not be expensive; rather, it needs to be palatable to Luffy." She seemed surprised at the request. "Luffy doesn't really like alcohol." She straightened out, and it was only my noble upbringing that had stopped me from interrupting her. As Luffy's older brother, I was well aware of his likes and dislikes. "Maybe it'd be better to get him some milk?"

"I'm afraid milk won't quite cut it," I inclined my head. "We had sworn our brotherhood, all those years ago, on sake. Swearing it again on anything else would be unlikely to bring forth the emotions I aim for." It was then that she had grasped my intention, her plump lips falling open in understanding.

"I'll make certain that we get something appropriate," she assured, then winked. "And I'll keep it out of Zoro's greedy mouth, too, at no extra cost." With a word of thanks, I had exited the room, leaving the matter in her capable hands.

[8] Homeisland and the resting place of Edward "Whitebeard" Newgate, as well as where Firefist Ace had been buried.

[9] Blackleg Sanji, also known as the third prince of Germa under the name of Vinsmoke which he had disowned.

North Blue - Flevance

Even with the leisurely rate of exploration due to the lack of any urgency whatsoever, the exploration and subsequent charting of the New World couldn't take forever. And, once tasked with picking their next destination, Luffy's answer was immediate: "Let's visit Torao[10]!" With use of the shipwright's[11] revolutionary inventions, we had crossed the Calm Belt in just a few Coup de Bursts, arriving in North Blue with a speed many would envy.

Trafalgar, as it turned out, had been hard at work ever since the change in the World order. He had claimed the corpse of Flevance[12] as his own, attempting to revitalize it to its former glory. Which, as he reluctantly accepted, the Strawhats could greatly assist with.

Nami-san, thanks to her experience with meteorology[13] and skill with her Clima-Tact, had been tasked with controlling the weather across the island. Curious about her talents and bereft of my own task, I had elected to come along, joining her upon Zeus[14], who expanded for the occasion.

It was quite fascinating to see Nami-san in her element: bringing forth the storms, calling up the winds, and directing sunshine towards wherever they were needed. She was clearly talented and took great joy in the task. A wide grin had never left her lips, and I found myself unable to look away from her radiant smile.

"What?" She had asked upon noticing my gaze, tilting her head towards me even as her hands never stopped operating her Clima-Tact in elegant arcs. "Have I got something on my face?" I wasn't quite certain how to respond to that. It was quite silly to admit that I had been so entranced by a simple expression.

"We should spar sometime," I had blurted out instead, mind latching onto the similarities between her tool and my weapon of choice. Thankfully, such an unusually weak distraction had still proven effective. Nami-san agreed eagerly, twirling her staff to the effect of a small vortex appearing behind her. The idea that she might be one of the few people capable of matching my skill filled me with excitement.

[10] The Surgeon of Death, Trafalgar D. Water Law. He had entered an alliance with the Strawhats back in 1524, and had failed to successfully dissolve it afterwards.

[11] Cyborg Franky, the builder of the Thousand Sunny.

[12] Island primarily known for its export of White Lead, the mining of which created poisonous deposits in the bodies of the population. Believing it to be contagious, the World Government had called for an extermination back in 1508. Trafalgar is the only known survivor.

[13] Nami-san had spent the years 1522-1524 on Weatheria, where she attained her mastery of weather control.

[14] Zeus used to be one of Charlotte "Big Mom" LinLin's homies, created from a fragment of her soul. Nami-san had stolen him during the Wano Liberation.

West Blue - Ohara

The crowning jewel of the West, Ohara[15], had been known for many things over the years. The reason for the Strawhats' visit, however, was only one; It was the motherland of our dear archeologist[16].

There had been some rumors of attempts to rebuild the institute, supposedly conducted by the scarce few scientists who had been abroad during the Buster Call[17]. Confirming those rumours had been of great import to Nico-san, and the crew had not hesitated to make it a priority.

We had found the settlement instantly upon arriving on the island. The new Oharians were eager to host their symbol, calling for a feast which, of course, instantly enamoured Luffy towards them. The rest of the crew had a choice between attending and exploring the island.

I have chosen the exploration, as did Nami-san. She had elected to come along with me, venturing towards the lake beside the burned out husk of what used to be the main library. A great number of books and other items had been dropped in the lake to protect them from the fire. Efforts to rescue them had begun as soon as it was safe to do so, with a number of people working on the shore at all times.

It had taken us all but one look to decide we wanted to offer assistance. Nami-san joined those who were collecting the items from the bottom of the lake and carefully bringing it to the surface, whereas I joined the team who was carefully drying and preserving the items the moment they were

out of the water. My Devil Fruit had not helped much in that endeavor, but it certainly kept me warm over the course of the day.

And, when the current shift ended and we were encouraged to return to the party, I was able to extend that same courtesy to Nami-san. Most everyone had their own towels and a change of clothes at hand, but there was no more pleasant way to dry oneself than using the Mera Mera no Mi.

Nami-san seemed to agree with me, sighing contently as I ran my hands over her arms, her sides, the length of her legs. She untied her hair and had me tangle my fingers in the fiery locks, carefully drying them without the smallest of flames in sight. The heat made her curls slightly more pronounced, bouncing delicately in the breeze and framing her face.

It was perhaps more a distracting sight than it should have been, leaving me staring in captivation for far longer than appropriate. Nami-san hardly seemed to mind; she merely laughed at my distraction and stepped away from my hold. Before I could regret the growing distance, she grabbed my hand. “Let’s go see if Luffy caused any chaos yet!” She said, and I followed easily.

[15] Known in scientific circles for its scholars; mostly forgotten by the general populace.

[16] Nico Robin, also known as the Devil Child. One of the few people alive capable of reading the language used on the Poneglyphs.

[17] The Ohara Incident, also known as the Annihilation of Ohara; Carried out in 1502 by government forces.

South Blue - Baterilla

It was at Baterilla that I had left to explore the island without any Strawhat nor anyone else to keep myself company. It had taken a fair amount of effort and every bit of the charisma and skill that had seen me through my job as a Revolutionary to obtain the information I needed from the local populace, but obtain it I had.

The spot I had been looking for was one I had naught but hope that it even existed: The final resting place of one Portgas D Rouge. Considering the circumstances of her death, it was a miracle she had been granted a grave marker at all, let alone one placed on its lonesome on a hill far from town.

Taking my tophat in hand, I had bowed before it, offering my thanks for her efforts. Ace had spent a long time learning manners in order to thank Shanks for saving Luffy's life [18]; it was only fair that I thanked Rouge for the miracle of giving Ace a chance to survive and meet us.

"Someone you know?" Nami-san's voice drifted from behind me as I straightened. "Not as such," I responded, wiping at the tears that welled up in my undamaged eye. "She had died months before I was even born. She had sacrificed herself for my brother and for that, she will have my undying gratitude."

Nami-san stood silently by my side as she took that in, the profile of her face illuminated by the sun approaching the horizon. It was only because I had already been looking that I noticed her determination settling on a goal. "Then I offer my thanks as well," she said as she bowed abruptly, keeping the pose for a moment. "I may have only met Ace once, and for a short moment at that, but it was clear to anyone with eyes that Luffy loved him to bits."

I stood there for a moment longer, not quite ready to leave. Nami-san seemed happy to wait with me, threading our fingers together and resting

her head on my shoulder. “Our crew doesn’t have much luck with mothers,” she said softly. “Or families in general[19]. Sometimes, I like to imagine they all got to meet in the afterlife. Watch us achieve our dreams…” Her voice lowered to a whisper as she said, “I hope Bell-Mere[20] is proud of me.”

Even knowing as little as I did, relaying on public information and the stories shared over meals, I had no doubt that she was.

[18] Saving Luffy from a Sea King in his youth had been the reason for Red Hair Shanks’ loss of arm.

[19] Referencing the fact that, between all twelve members of the Strawhat crew, there were four absent parents, five sets of dead parents, four dead mothers, three dead adoptive parents, and three abusive parents.

[20] Bell-Mere was a Marine who left the Navy in order to take in the orphans she found on a battlefield, Nojiko and Nami.

East Blue - Cocoyashi

Warned in advance, the populace of Cocoyashi had a feast prepared and ready to begin the moment Thousand Sunny had anchored in the port. The villagers had swarmed the crew as soon as we stepped foot on the island, although the attention was heavier on Nami-san, as was typical for Strawhat motherlands. That wasn’t to say they held no interest in Luffy; he had earned their gratitude early on in his journey[21].

It was only because of my attention being so primed to focus on Nami-san (I had paid her almost as much mind as I did my brother) that I noticed

when she had skillfully extracted herself from the party. Moments like these showed without a shadow of a doubt that she had earned her early moniker of Catburglar[22].

Acting on an impulse, I followed after her. She had noticed me instantly, of course, seeing how I made no effort to hide. Looking back, Nami-san tilted her head, wordlessly asking my reasoning. It was hard to verbalise, even in the confines of my own mind.

She had come to comfort me when I needed it on Baterilla. I had an open invitation to work on this journal in her study, but she was the one who suggested I write a similar collection of stories about Ace, helping me find people who met him in our journeys. She'd often sit with me, when melancholy became too much; didn't she deserve comfort in her moment of need, too?

Catching up with her, I extended my hand, palm up. If Nami-san had chosen to carry on alone, I would have of course respected that choice. But I didn't think it fair to leave her without the option, at the very least. And when, after a fortifying breath, she accepted my hand, clutching at it with all her might, I was glad to have offered.

We walked the path through the forest, passing by an old farmhouse and crossing through an orchard in order to reach a cliff with a singular grave resting atop it. It seemed to be a popular location for graves, from what I've seen. Even my empty grave, Luffy had told me once, was placed on the cliff where we had declared our dreams.

As we sat before the grave, Nami had recounted her achievements, choking through her tears. There were many of those to recount, the biggest being the completion of her map of the world. The sun began to set before she was finished, and I had draped my coat over her shoulders to keep the chill at bay.

"She'd be proud of you," I told her once she finished, absolutely certain of that fact. And, as Nami-san burrowed into my arms, I was hit with a long-coming realization. All those times I found myself unable to look away, entranced by her very being led to this moment; and I wanted to keep supporting her for the rest of our lives.

[21] Referencing Luffy's defeat of Arlong in 1522, ending the pirate's 8 years long dictatorship over Cocoyashi.

[22] Nami had originally earned the title of Catburglar while gathering 1,000,000 berries, a challenge given to her by Arlong in order to buy out and free the people of Cocoyashi.

[23] Nami and Sabo had gotten married shortly before the public release of the world's atlas, and lived happily ever after.

Ingredients:
3 ounces prosecco, 2 ounces Aperol, 1 ounce club soda, Garnish: orange slice.

From Reiju. To Nami

By: Katia_Anyway

My dear baby brother,

I am sending you this letter to inform you that the Germa Kingdom is back in the North Blue. After our misadventures on Whole Cake Island, Judge has decided to give up on his plans of expansions through alliances and has gone back to his original methods. I don't know how long our brothers will keep obeying him. Their loyalty isn't what it used to be. I'm hoping it'll help them come to their senses the way you and I did but I can't be sure it'll work out.

In the meantime, you and your crew are safe from Germa's claws. I apologize again for the pain we caused you, baby brother. I'll do all I can to protect you better in the future.

How are you? Have you been reunited with the rest of your crew? Tell me, are they as happy to see you free as your Captain and Navigator were? How are they, by the way?

Is your Captain feeling better? I hope I got all the poison out of him properly. I also hope his wounds are healing well.

And your Navigator? I hope she's okay as well. I've heard she stole a part of Big Mom's power! What an incredible exploit! It was so refreshing to meet a woman with such talents and bravery. I wish we had more time to get to know each other better. I would have loved to ask her how her weapon worked. Also, maybe she could have taught me a thing or two about navigating outside of the North Blue. The New World's unexpected weather changes were so unsettling.

I still dream of her dress, dear brother. The elegance of the cut, the way it highlighted the fire of her hair... You'd think red and orange would look terrible together. And yet... But also... the fact that she dared crash a wedding wearing red, showing up bold and determined, unafraid and uncaring that she looked more dashing that the bride herself... The way it clung to her curves, attracted the eyes to her shoulders, to her neck... What I wouldn't have given, to trace the seam

of the fabric with a single finger...

I was also really impressed by the way she dealt with the crew and with your unruly Captain. She stayed in control of the situation, adaptating as it went on, despite the high stress of it all. Her emotions were like a storm, powerful and intense, on display for all to see, and yet they only made her stronger. People loved and respected her, as she shouted and ordered, whether she was mad or cowering. It was a breath of fresh air, for me who's been taught emotions are a weakness, to be crushed under one's heel and forgotten. She conducted an entire rescue mission in enemy territory, despite her crew making random decisions that threw wrenches in her plans. I definitely could use that skill. Both our brothers and Judge have started relying on me to be the middle man between them and it can be very frustrating to keep them all in check.

Would your Navigator be opposed to giving me a few lessons? I know it's a lot to ask... We could meet on neutral ground if that helps. And I'd pay for whatever restaurant or cafe she wants to go to, of course. I'd even bring her a gift, if that might make her at ease.

Tell me, does she have any preferences? Flowers, candies, even clothes. I could even afford to get her something exotic, if that's her preference.

I am eagerly waiting to read your response and wishing you safe travels, Sanji.

With love, Reiju

PS: I came back to this letter three times already, wondering if I should ask or if it would be impolite. I think I will dare, and let you decide if you want to answer or not. Does your Navigator like women, perchance?

Dear Reiju;

Sanji told me about your letter.

Well, technically, he tried to ask me if I liked women, if I liked them with tattoos, if I liked them strong... It was getting so unsubtle I just had to call him out on it. He bent like a faulty lawn chair! I hope this letter wasn't a secret because that would make him a terrible secret keeper.

To answer your question, yes, I like women. Preferably the ones who have both a strong body and strong convictions. I'd be very happy to see you again, and to get to know you properly. I wouldn't say no to an expensive gift, either. Surprise me!

I have to say, you did impress me too. Your courage and strength of character in the face of adversity. I don't know if I would have reacted as coolly as you did when Big Mom threatened to have you and your entire family killed.

Also, the fact that, after all of this, you decided to help save Sanji. I still don't know how you convinced your brothers to go along with this. But I wanted to thank you. I don't know if either our Cook or our Captain would have managed to get away if you hadn't been there. So thank you. I'm very grateful.

Sadly, I can't navigate all the way to the North Blue to see you, right now. I have a Captain to make the Pirate King, after all. That and a bunch of idiots to keep alive in the process.

But as soon as we're done with this adventure, I'd love to meet up with you, of course. And in the meantime, we can send each other letters. We don't have to go through Sanji to talk to each other.

Waiting to read from you.

Sincerely, Nami, the Strawhat Navigator

I like it. But I am not sure if it's the best for me...
Oh Reijou! This one is perfect!
But I can't... I don't know if I should be getting it...
My darling the price hasn't stopped me from buying pretty things to you.
If you want it, you should get it
Nami, my darling, you are worth every berry I had spend.

Cherry Blossoms

By: Clown

To: Cat Burglar Nami

From: Kikunojo the Lingering Snow

Dear Nami,

I hope this letter finds you well, wherever you are, and that my handwriting isn't too difficult to read. I am still adjusting to writing with my other hand.

But you'll be glad to hear I'm being fitted for a prosthetic later this month, likely when you'll receive this letter. The craftsmen who are making it for me are very kind, even if they continue to flirt with me after I let them know my heart lies with another.

Wano has been entering a new age of prosperity now that Kaido and Orochi have been defeated. Lord Momonosuke is an excellent leader, and has given me time off my duties as a Scabbard while I continue to recover and eventually get used to the prosthetic. I have been enjoying helping as I can with the children while their parents work on rebuilding homes and businesses that were damaged in the battles. They all love the stories I tell them about your crew, and some of the girls have started asking the craftsmen to make them Clima-Tacts just like yours!

I must admit, I did have another reason to write this other than filling you in on parts of my everyday life. I wanted to tell you that I think about our time together in the weeks before you departed … often. Perhaps more than just often.

The way your hair shone and fell across your shoulders and back in the baths was a sight more beautiful than any of the jewels you could steal. And yes, I do know about the missing jewels from the vaults, and while I cannot fully condone it, it just makes me fall in love a little more.

Those quick and nimble hands that are the terror of royalty across the seas were the same that helped change my bandages, and tied my hair back, and helped me get dressed. How could I feel anything but honoured?

Oh I feel so embarrassed writing this all down, but I never got the chance to properly tell you how I felt outside of the kiss! You're just so … incredible!

The kiss, oh the kiss! I … I've kissed many men and women over my years, and none have quite made me blush like the kiss you gave me.

I hope that you feel the same as I do, and I … Well, I'll be waiting for your reply.

With my love,

Kiku

To: Kiku

From: Nami

Kiku,

I'm sorry it took so long to get back to you! I've been busy with the crew and whatever latest thing that Luffy's been dragging us into. You've probably seen what's happened in the newspapers, so you know what the hell he's been getting up to.

It's been an absolute shitstorm over here, but your letter made me smile. And don't worry about your handwriting. It's miles better than most (cough, Luffy, cough), even if you're writing with your non-dominant hand. It's cute, honestly.

Okay, Kiku, I do feel the same about you. I like you. I wouldn't have kissed you if I didn't like you, and I sure as hell wouldn't have stolen as little as I had if I didn't like you a **whole** lot.

You're beautiful, strong, smart, and you don't take anyone's shit. If you ever want to leave Wano, to explore the New World, you'll have a place on the Strawhat Crew. You can stay in my cabin. I do have a cabin all to myself, by the way, with a queen-sized bed ;)

The rest of the crew sends their thanks for your help in Wano, and Zoro wants you to come join the crew because he wants someone to fight with that isn't blonde, and a cook, and who can actually fight with a sword. Luffy said something while he was eating, and then fell asleep, but I can roughly translate that it's something about the tea you made him.

Chopper wrote his own letter for you, it'll probably come just before or after this arrives. It's just a bunch of tips and tricks on how to adjust to

having one arm, how to take care of yourself, and just a lot of medical stuff I don't understand, but he was so excited, and wants me to let you know that he wishes you the best.

Shit– I have to go, Luffy's trying to fight a Sea King and the News Coo you sent your letter with is getting scared. Fuck I don't get a break around here.

See you again, maybe?

Nami ~ xoxo

To: Cat Burglar Nami

From: Kikunojo the Lingering Snow

Dear Nami,

First things first, you must let Chopper know that I appreciated his letter greatly.

Second things, well, second, I would love to come visit, to join you and the rest of the Straw Hats! Not in any truly official capacity, but, as a guest upon the Sunny perhaps? My words are mixing themselves up, I apologise. Let me start over.

What I wanted to say was that I'd love to come see you, and travel for a little on the Thousand Sunny, if you'd have me?

Not much remains for me in Wano right now. Yamato and Lord Momonosuke are taking care of the country both as unofficial protector, and Shogun, and well, while I have adapted to writing a little better with my other hand, and am getting more confident with my prosthetic every day, I cannot wield a sword as well as I once did.

Perhaps some time sparring with Zoro would do me well. I know he wouldn't hold his punches so to speak

I just ... what I wish to say, it would be better done in person, but until then, I shall write it.

I want to kiss you again. I want to run my fingers through your hair, and to feel the warmth of your skin against mine. I want to braid your hair with the cherry blossoms that seem to bloom in your presence. To ... to be near you is something that I crave. I know it might sound cliche, but like I wrote before, I keep replaying the kiss you gave me in my mind, over and over.

If Luffy will have me on board as a guest, I would be honoured. And if you were to open your bed to me ... well, I would be in your debt.

Until we can see each other again,

Kiku.

To: Kiku

From: Nami

Kiku,

Of course you can come on board! You have no idea how excited everyone is to see you again. Luffy's been practically bouncing off the walls, well, even more than usual. He's chanting the names of some of the food he had back then while shoving random snacks into his mouth, so I'm guessing he's planning to eat his way through every cuisine Wano has to offer. Please tell all the vendors to be ready for him, because he's going to eat a Sea King's weight in food.

But enough about Luffy's luffyness.

I can't stop thinking about **us**. The thought of seeing you again makes me feel flustered, like actually flustered. I thought the only thing that could make me feel like this was the idea of more treasure, but I guess you do the trick as well, huh?

I want to take you on the perfect date. We can sneak away from the crew's chaos and have a quiet dinner, just the two of us at the waterfalls. I'll hold you close, and I won't stop kissing you until you realise you aren't too forward about this kinda thing.

And speaking of forward, let me be perfectly clear: you still hold the title of the cutest girl in Wano, and the Grand Line, and anyone who says otherwise will get a firm electric shock to the head. Since we kissed, your smile, your laugh, the way you killed people so gracefully with your sword **...** it's been on replay for me as well. It sounds cheesy but I actually felt my heart beat quicker when I thought of you. It was either that, or I've got a heart condition, and Chopper's ruled that out, so I guess you're the

cause of my heart fluttering. Kissing you again might make it worse, but I'll at least go out doing something I love; making out with a cute girl. ;)

Oh, and as for where you'll stay in the Sunny, let's just say my cabin's queen bed has plenty of room for two. ;;;))

See you soon Kiku <3

Nami ~ xoxo

Kintsukuroi

By: Three

Kintsukuroi 金繕い*: golden repair, or the act of taking something broken and making it better than it was before*

With Kaido defeated, Orochi dethroned, Wano saved, and Luffy finally awake, there was only one thing left to do.

Party until dawn.

Nami had been partaking in any drink she could find and indulging in whatever food came her way, and it was wonderful. She may not have been living under Kaido's thumb for the past two decades like most of the citizens here, but after spending the past few weeks on Wano, their struggles became her struggles. She felt their elation for their freedom, their grief over what had been lost, but most of all she felt their joy all around her, celebrating like there was no tomorrow.

She started off the evening with her crew, drinking and laughing as they always did, but they began to peel off one by one, and eventually she found herself wandering between the stalls looking for something exciting.

It came in the form of a blue haired beauty, Momonosuke's sister and the prettiest woman Wano had to offer, Hiyori.

Hiyori had spent most of her time since the raid tending to an unconscious Zoro. A huge waste of time, in Nami's opinion, considering Zoro never showed interest in anyone not holding a sword, and never once in a woman.

But Nami was more than willing to step in and appreciate what Zoro didn't.

She and Hiyori had created a bit of a rapport while waiting for Luffy and Zoro to wake up, which was why she felt perfectly confident in walking up

to her and saying, “Hey, Hiyori! So this is where you’ve run off to?”

“Oh!” Hiyori blinked, but smiled when she saw it was her, “Nami! Are you enjoying the festivities?”

“Yeah,” she sat down next to her, close enough to feel the heat coming off of her, and took a giant swig of her drink. “How about yourself?”

“Yes,” she gave her a strained smile and stared into the depths of her own drink. “It’s been wonderful.”

Nami frowned as she looked at Hiyori. She knew that look on her face, and was intimately familiar with the nuances and complex emotions that came with it.

“Yeah,” she sighed as she placed her drink down, “I get it.”

Hiyori tilted her head as she turned to face Nami fully, “Get what?”

“You’re happy that you’re free,” she said, a soft smile on her face. “But you’re upset that it took so long.”

Hiyori blushed, her eyes growing wide, “I would never—You’ve all been so kind—I’m quite *thankful* that–”

“You’re thankful, sure,” she conceded with a nod. “But you’re scared too, because while you’ve *hoped* and *prayed* this would happen, you’re not actually sure what to do now that it has.”

Hiyori’s mouth snapped shut, and she stared at Nami with wide eyes, begging her to continue.

“You’re angry that you’ve *lost* so much, people who should’ve been here,

time that you can never get back," Nami's eyes grew distant as she ran a hand through her hair. "You're grieving that you can never get it back, and you feel guilty for feeling so happy."

"Yes…" Hiyori leaned in until she was pressing against Nami's side, "Yes … How did you…?"

"When I was eight, a pirate named Arlong took over my island." Nami hugged herself. She was free now, she didn't mind talking about it—especially if her experience could help someone else—but bringing up the memories always left her feeling shaky. "He killed my mother, then forced me to work for him for the next ten years."

"So, yeah," she glanced up at Hiyori and smiled. "I get what you're feeling."

Hiyori placed a soft, warm hand on her shoulder, right over the fading scar, "I'm sorry you had to go through that."

Nami laughed, rubbing her eyes with the heel of her hand before tears could form. "It was just one island. You lost your entire country."

"We both were put in terrible situations by terrible men," Hiyori's thumb rubbed comforting circles into her shoulder, "It's not a competition about who suffered more or who lost the most."

"True," she unfolded from herself, and turned her full smile onto Hiyori, "Anyway, my point was that freedom is complicated. It's okay to enjoy the moment, despite everything you've lost. It's okay to be unsure about tomorrow." She bumped her shoulder against Hiyori's, "You'll take it one step at a time, like you've always done."

"Yes," Hiyori smiled a little wider, a bit more genuine as she leaned further against Nami. "Yes, I … I suppose I must." She rested her head on Nami's

shoulder, “Thank you.”

Nami blushed, suddenly very aware she had one of the most beautiful women she’d ever laid eyes on laying against her shoulder, and followed her instincts: “You want a drink?”

They ended up drinking well into the next morning, the party still going strong.

When it was time for the Straw Hats to finally leave Wano, Nami made sure to find Hiyori first to give her a News Coo seagull.

“I know you’re not opening up Wano just yet,” she said after she explained how to send letters with it, “but it’ll still be good practice to keep in touch. If you write to me, I can write and send it back to you.”

Hiyori gave her a knowing smile. “Methinks, O-Nami, that you simply desire a correspondence with me.”

She chuckled, completely caught. “Can you blame me? But seriously, write to me, okay? I wanna know how you’re doing.”

“I will,” she agreed easily. “As long as you promise to write back. I want to hear all about your adventures, no matter how boring you think they are.”

Nami grinned, her heart fluttering in her chest, “It’s a deal.”

Dear O-Nami,

You requested I write to you, and so I am. I am not so used to putting my thoughts into plain words out in the open like this, so I beg your forgiveness if this letter does not meet your standards.

We all have been hard at work rebuilding Wano. Admiral Ryokugyu's assault has turned into a boon, providing the landscape with the much needed green that Kaido and Orochi stole from it, but we still have a long way to go before we are ecologically sound once more.

Most of my father's retainers have been sent to the various regions of Wano to aid in the rebuilding there. Denjiro, who I was closest to, is now Daimyo of Kibi, and while I miss having him around, he has taken to his role quite well. Yamato is off on a quest of his own, determined to see all of Wano just like my father before him, and I am surprised to miss his companionship as well.

I have been spending most of my time as a liaison between my brother and the people of the Flower Capital. This has proven rather difficult, as my brother still sees me as his little sister, and the people of Wano still see me as Komurasaki. Either way, my thoughts and actions are not taken seriously, and the whole endeavor has proven very frustrating.

Still, I do what I must for my people.

You and your crew are sorely missed here. I often find myself wondering how you would handle yourself in various situations. Would O-Nami have let that slight slide, or would she have stood up for herself? If I could, I would consult you about every little detail, but I wouldn't wish to bother you when you are so busy.

Please write to me if you get a chance. I would love to hear about what fantastic adventures the Straw Hat Pirates are up to these days.

Farewell,

Kozuki Hiyori

Dear Hiyori,

You can write to me whenever, I'm always happy to hear from you! Although sometimes my advice would be "have you tried punching them in the face?"

Although, have you tried punching them in the face? Can't believe after everything you've done for Wano they'd treat you like that. If punching is too dignified for a princess, I can always send a targeted thunderstorm their way.

It's been pretty quiet around here, all things considered. Now that Luffy's an Emperor, we've had ambitious bounty hunters after our heads, but they're nothing the crew can't handle. The Marines leave us alone for the most part, too afraid of the mean scary Emperor I guess, so we've had very peaceful days here on the Sunny.

I miss you too. I feel like we barely got any time together, and I would have loved to get to know you better. But we can do that now if we're keeping up the pen pal thing.

I'll start: What's your favorite color? Favorite food? Favorite season? Do you like girls and especially navigators with tattoos?

I'm kidding, you don't have to answer that, but I would love to hear about the things you do like. What does the beautiful Wano princess get up to in her free time?

Write me back soon,

Nami

Dear O-Nami,

My favorite color is pink, my favorite food is kappamaki, and my favorite season is spring. I have a preference for girls and quite like tattoos. I've only met one navigator, but I like her a lot, and would love to hear her answers as well as how she feels about oirans turned princesses.

As for what I get up to in my free time, I enjoy the shamisen. I regret that I don't have much free time these days between consulting my brother and attending to the needs of our people, but I do bring it out and play whenever I get the chance.

I didn't quite end up punching my brother in the face as per your advice, but in a fit of thinking *what would Nami do,* I did sit down and talk with him, so I must extend my thanks to you for that. He didn't realize he'd been talking over me so much, and is making an effort to listen to me more, even going so far as to stand up to Kin'emon when he tried to dismiss my ideas once more.

It's slow, but it's progress. Hopefully the rest of the retainers will follow the Shogun's example, and bring about an era where women can contribute to matters of state as well, and together we can make Wano the best it can possibly be.

Your time at sea sounds lovely. I barely remember my own time at sea as a baby, but I would always love hearing my father's stories about his adventures.

Please don't spare any detail when you tell me of your next adventure. I want to live as vicariously through you as possible.

Until then,

Hiyori

Dear Hiyori,

My favorite color is orange, my favorite food is tangerines, but I also really liked the oshiruko while I was in Wano, and my favorite season is summer. I also like girls and tattoos, and think oirans and princesses are amazing and beautiful and strong, no matter what role they're taking on.

Glad to hear about Momo giving you your due! I was tempted to go over there and give him a piece of my mind after your last letter – Shogun or not. It's good you're getting the respect around there that you deserve.

Okay, day at sea with lots of details. Today started out pretty cloudy. Sanji made waffles for breakfast. Usopp, Luffy, and Chopper spent the morning fishing while Jinbei and I figured out the next part of our course. The triple log pose is a truly fascinating navigation device, which should allow for us to take the safer and easier path to the next island. But of course, Luffy always insists on the most dangerous route possible. Lucky for him, he has me to navigate and Jinbei to steer, so we always get where we're going.

By noon, the weather turned to a typhoon. We all holed up in the galley to wait for it to pass (save for Zoro, who decided it was the perfect condition to train through), and Sanji made pumpkin soup and club sandwiches for lunch. Robin and Chopper read, Brook practiced his violin, Usopp, Franky, Jinbei and I played cards, and Sanji did his best to keep Luffy out of the pantry.

At around three, the rain let up to a beautiful summer day. Franky opened up the pool out of the Sunny's channels so everyone could swim around for a bit. I wore my new bikini that I looked incredibly hot in,

wish you could've seen it. You definitely would've fallen in love with me haha.

The temperature dropped drastically as the afternoon wore on, and by the early evening there was a squall. Luffy wanted to ride it as far as it would take us, so it was all hands on deck as we made up time for stopping earlier. By the time that was done, it was dinner time, and Sanji made curry.

By nightfall it was snowing. We gave Luffy and Brook the night watch while the rest of us grabbed whatever blankets we could and went to bed.

I hope that's enough of an adventure to please you, princess.

I missed you the whole time. I know Wano needs you, but if you ever want to sail again, I'd welcome you with open arms, and, I suppose I'll be bold enough to end this with...

Love,

Nami

Dearest O-Nami,

Bold indeed, but your sentiments are very much reciprocated. I've also missed you quite a lot, and while I am grateful that our correspondence allows me to keep you in my life, it has made the wanting for you grow.

Thank you for telling me about your day. I feel like I was right along there with you, and perhaps someday I shall be. For now, just imagining being by your side and stealing kisses from you shall have to suffice.

You'll be happy to hear I've officially been made the head of reconstruction in the Flower Capital. I was quite nervous at first, but thinking of you navigating your crew through the perils of the New World gave me the strength and courage to rise to the role. I know we'll make Wano better than it's ever been, and I eagerly await the day you can see it.

I hope your next adventure brings you wealth and prosperity, and that you make it back to me safely.

Love,

Hiyori

My dear Hiyori,

Hearing you feel the same is the best thing I've heard. I actually twirled on the deck and squealed as I read your letter, and Zoro had the nerve to call me Sanji for the rest of the day. But don't worry, his debt has been increased accordingly.

I'm thrilled you're getting your due! You're gonna do great, I know it! I can't wait to see Wano again once you're through with it, although I will be expecting a personal tour from a certain princess.

Our next adventure is just along the horizon. The weather evened out to cold and snowy, so we're approaching a winter island soon. There seem to be a lot of strange fish in this ocean, almost like robots? Franky seems excited, but it looks like this will be a small island, so I doubt much will happen. We should be over and done before you know it, and I'll be sure to tell you all about it.

Until then, I'll be missing you.

All my love,

Nami

Hiyori smiled as she finished reading the letter, storing it alongside the rest of her treasures: the shamisen her father gave her, her mother's favorite hair clip, a scrap from the scarf Kawamatsu was wearing the night they escaped the fire, a pressed sakura blossom Denjiro gave her when he first arrived at the capital, and the rest of Nami's letters that smelled heavily of tangerines.

She glanced out the window that overlooked the Flower Capital. The ocean was miles away, but if she closed her eyes she could almost smell the salt from it, hear the waves crashing against the shore, could feel Nami's warmth next to her again and see her smile.

There was a knock on her door, and Hiyori turned to find Kin'emon there.

"Lady Hiyori," he said with a bow, "The head carpenters are here. They insist on meeting with you to finalize the plans for the financial districts before they begin construction."

She smiled at him, "Yes, I'll be right there."

He bowed again, and took his leave.

She took a deep breath as she glanced out the window, thinking of Nami once more as she gathered her thoughts for the upcoming meeting.

Soon, she told herself, she'd see Nami again soon.

Until then she had work to do.

R-K
2024

In the Mermaid's Cove

By: PiratePlunder

"Your friends certainly know how to make a splash," Ishilly prodded Camie on the nose as she swam elegantly past her. Camie smiled in pride, rubbing her nose.

"They're really interesting people," Camie gushed, weaving through kelp. "You'll really love them!"

"Like you love her, huh," Ishilly teased.

Camie squawked, the surprised jolt and hurried shake of her hands and head seeing her tangled within the seaweed. Laughing merrily, Ishilly helped the notoriously clumsy mermaid unravel the snarls, taking her time as she brushed a strand passed her ear. Fondness in her dark eyes had Camie's head swimming, the mischievous and haplessly charmed smile on the pigtailed mermaid's face reminding Camie of well … *her.*

Oh, gods. After all these years, Nami was *here.* In the New World. On her island. She giddily kicked out her muscular tail, floating high in the water as she twirled around on loop. Ishilly rolled her eyes at her ridiculous antics, but was quick to link their hands and join her in her fangirling spiral.

"She's here, Ishy, she's here," Camie squealed and squirmed, shaking their interlocked hands in rabid excitement.

"I know, Cam," Ishilly's smile was casually warm as ever, her ponytails fanning in the water around them as she leant her forehead against her best friend and casual lover. She giggled. "It was hard not to notice. Humans are so loud and … intriguing."

"She's not just any human either," Camie sighed dreamily as she drifted along the current. "Nami-person is—the whole Straw Hat crew are world shakers. They're not like any other human."

Ishilly teased, "You don't really know many other humans though. Not ones that didn't mean you harm, anyway."

"Yes. But I know they're exceptional," Camie groused, pouting. "You'll see what I mean when you meet them properly."

Ishilly had never expected to see a man fly and require a blood transfusion while in her arms, so that was somewhat of an exceptional occurrence. Ishilly was somewhat stunned by the whole experience, even days later after a kidnapping, a king's kidnapping and a fight for the future of Fish Man Island. But she was completely knocked over when she finally met the rest of the Straw Hats that had been separated from Luffy, the liar, the reindeer and the pervert.

"You can laugh at the idiot but"—Ishilly couldn't find her voice, yet alone laugh, as her eyes caught on the goddess before her— "God, he's so embarrassing. Literally cannot take him anywhere. I'm so sorry for his behavior. I promise not all of us are like that. It's just a Sanji thing."

Camie's words had failed to do Nami justice. She had thought Camie's gushing to be exaggerated, but it turned out words were not adequate to explain the wave of warmth, calm, mischief and beauty that washed over Ishilly as she looked into Nami's toffee-brown eyes.

"It's long forgotten and forgiven," Ishilly smiled, tilting her head in what she hoped was an inviting matter. "You saved us all from an endless cycle of violence. A little bit of blood from an over-excited man pales in comparison to the hope you've all given us. Don't worry, and I hope you can just enjoy the party with the rest of us."

Nami looked relieved as she took a seat beside the lounging striped beakfish mermaid. "Still. Sorry for our pathetic man."

Ishilly's smile was unable to be contained as she agreed. "He's a little

pitiful. But I assume he must have been through a lot."

"He never used to be this bad," Nami sighed, looking towards her partying friends. Shirahoshi was lifting Chopper up to gather a high growing piece of medicinal coral. "Absence could have made me forget his flaws, but I think something happened to him over our training period that shook him to the core. Still, he was gross to you, and you didn't deserve that."

Ishilly's eyes widened as she let out a helpless gasp. *Oh.* Oh her kindness had not been exaggerated by Camie as the result of her infatuation.

Nami squinted. "What is Camie doing?"

"What do you mean—Oh, Cam."

Camie had put on her Mermaid Café apron and was serving partygoers as if they were customers.

"It's your day off too, you silly goose," Nami shook her head, smiling fondly. She stood up, drawn towards the green-haired mermaid as if pulled on an invisible string. "She's too selfless. She's a hero of the hour—she shouldn't be bringing people tea and beers."

"It's her day off, too," Ishilly groused. "Madam Shyarly gave us all the evening off. I hope Camie didn't feel compelled into waiting on people."

"Whoever did is going to get a beating," Nami adjusted her bikini straps, before getting her fists ready to throw.

Only for Camie to put the pints of beer in front of Zoro, and replace it with the empty plates from the food Luffy was shoveling down. A vein ticked in Nami's forehead.

"Of course it's those two idiots."

Sanji was frying up meat skewers behind them, and he flinched and looked away when he saw Ishilly, face a vibrant red. So, he felt ashamed. Good. The whole trio should.

With a flick of her hair over her shoulder, Nami sauntered over to the mermaid waitress who was in deep conversation with Usopp. The sound of her bubbly voice made Nami's heart clench. Smoothly, she came up behind Camie, putting her hands over her eyes and reveling in the way Camie gasped at the lights suddenly going out.

"Guess whose favorite human wants to say hi," the redhead purred into her ear.

"Nami-person!" Camie squealed and squirmed out from under her hands. She tackled the human in a hug, squeezing her tight. Nami made sure not to comment on the sniffling, just rubbing her back gently.

"It's good to be able to chat," Nami soothed, hand tracing from skin to scales. "Without the threat of a kingdom being toppled."

"Yeah," Camie hiccupped, beaming up at her. "I don't have to act as brave and on a mission."

"You are brave, you silly guppy," Nami chided, rubbing circles on her hips. Camie sighed and swayed into her touch. "Honey, you didn't challenge Zoro to a drinking contest did you?"

Camie giggled, shaking her head. "I'm just so happy," she beamed, tears in her dark eyes. " … And maybe a little tired."

The mermaid's shoulders slumped. "I don't want you to go yet."

Nami smiled sadly. "Adventure awaits. But we won't be leaving for another couple of days. You can show me all your favorite reefs and kelp

forests, if you want."

Camie perked up. "I've always wanted to share my home with you."

Nami chuckled, hand possessive on Camie's hip. "I'm not quite ready to settle down, darling. But maybe one day."

Camie's face reddened, arms flailing haplessly as she wiggled out of Nami's hold. "Oh my gosh I didn't mean it like that—Wah oh my god that was too forward."

"Shouldn't you ask your other roommate before inviting a new one?" Ishilly swam up alongside her, cupping a hand to poor Camie's flummoxed, flustered cheek. Ishilly caught Nami's eye with a knowing smile, and Nami couldn't help but smirk. It was too fun making Camie flail.

Camie's gaze darted between them hurriedly, tongue-tied, not sure what to say and looking for someone to throw her a line.

Ishilly broke first, brushing a kiss against her co-worker's cheek. "I'm just kidding. Of course, Nami's allowed to stay over whenever she wants. She's an absolute hero." Ishilly threw her a wink, eyes darkening as she bit her lower lip. "And a babe."

It was Nami's turn to redden slightly, but rather than flounder and wilt like Camie, she straightened up and gave a confident smile, eyeing up the striped mermaid as if she wanted to devour her. "You're not too bad yourself."

Ishilly preened, fingers twirling one of her pigtails none-too-subtly. "And of course, there's our cute Camie."

Camie gulped, scratching the back of her neck awkwardly as both women

returned their attention and devotion to their easily flustered sweetheart.

"Our beautiful Camie," Nami murmured, bringing up her other hand to brush a kiss to her palm, before nuzzling her cheek into it. The eye-contact made Camie shiver. "Sweetest heart on all the seas."

Sanji stepped forward, as if ready to sing Camie praises, but shrank back at Nami's glare. He would not break their bubble of affection.

"I think your heart's the kindest, Nami," Camie murmured, looking down at her tail awkwardly. Ishilly tapped her chin up. "You're my hero."

Ishilly smiled, giving Camie a thumbs up. She knew how much the words meant to Camie. How brave she was to share them.

"You have a kind heart to forgive Hatchin, and Jinbei, and to help us all even if all we do is get you into trouble."

Nami tutted and flicked her between the eyes. "None of that. My help is willingly given to friends, and you're no trouble."

"I haven't been eaten by a Sea King since we met," Camie smiled bashfully. "I've been brave, but I've also been more observant. More careful. Even if I have a goldfish memory."

Nami flicked her again. "Don't be mean to my friend. She deserves nicer words. None of this self-deprecation."

Ishilly rubbed Camie's forehead soothingly while Nami cupped her face.

"And I made friends, and broke out on my own," Camie beamed. "Ishilly helped so much, she's the best colleague ever. It's always fun working at the Mermaid Café with her. She looks out for me when I forget orders and when customers are being mean."

"You're not that forgetful, Cam," Ishilly smooched her forehead. "Not about the important things."

Nami looked at the dark-haired mermaid with fondness, brushing a strand of fringe behind Ishilly's ear. "You guys make a great team, huh."

"Yep!" Camie grinned, before bashfully adding while twiddling her fingers together. "Only thing that would make it better is if you could be here, too."

Nami chuckled, a bit distracted as Ishilly swam back to bite and nibble playfully at her fingers. She hooked a finger in Ishilly's mouth, tugging. "I don't think Madam Shyarly would want a human working at the Mermaid café, let alone a Straw Hat."

Camie smiled at their antics, but held onto Nami's every word. "I think that's water under the bridge now. You saved the Island, and didn't destroy it. Predictions can be wrong!"

Nami just smiled. "I don't think I'd be much of a waitress, anyway. I think I'd be too busy flirting with all the cute mermaid co-workers to do my job."

"Camie, you never told me she was such a smooth and incorrigible tease," Ishilly's tail draped itself over Camie as she hugged her from behind.

"Feeling a bit out-gamed?" Nami poked her tongue out.

Ishilly laughed and buried her face in Camie's hair. "Hardly. You're very amusing, and flattery will get you everywhere."

Nami looked at the way their tail fins twined together, like they were made for each other, and felt the urge to draw a hand through the fronds. She didn't have a tail herself, but it looked like they were being used as another

way to hold each other.

Always one to follow her instincts, she trailed a hand up the long muscles, enjoying the way their scales pricked at her palms. So smooth … She was intrigued by the way the scales on Ishilly's black stripes were denser, smaller and more compact than the almost cloud-shaped white scales. Ishilly and Camie's tails parted to let her hand in-between, holding it snug.

"You guys can hug with your whole bodies," Nami said in awe.

The mermaids nodded, wrapping their arms around her. Nami removed her hand so she could fist her hand in Camie's shirt, breathing in the warm seaweed scent of her skin. "I'm so glad you're doing well. I was so scared in Sabaody. Not really knowing what happened to you was driving me insane."

"Oh Nami," Camie brushed her hand through her hair. "I was so scared too. Nobody knew where you'd gone. It was hard to trust people a bit after what happened on that island. Being trapped in a glass bowl with a bomb collar while the worst of humanity bid on my fate," Camie shuddered, closing her eyes.

Ishilly bundled her up in her arms, Camie holding Nami, Ishilly holding Camie. "You don't have to go back there," Ishilly murmured into her ear.

"But I did go back, Ishilly," Camie craned her neck up. "I went back many times in the beginning, not knowing when Nami-person and her friends would be back, and then I missed picking them up to help them get safely to Fishman Island because I got the month wrong!"

"I meant to go back to the memory of that horror show," Ishilly rubbed her shoulders soothingly.

Nami stared up at Camie, gaping. "You went back to Sabaody for me?

Many times?"

"I was safe!" Camie pouted. "Like I said, I was extra careful. No revealing myself to humans other than Ray-person and Shakky, no getting eaten by Sea Kings. I was responsible! I never even went back to the amusement park, even if the lights did call to me. It wouldn't have been the same as that day, anyway."

"What do you mean? That you're tougher and more world-weary?" Nami tried to tease, but her heart wasn't in it.

"What made that day at the amusement park special for me was getting to ride the Ferris Wheel with you, and try out all the fun rides by your side," Camie blushed, but was resolute. "And the other Straw Hats of course! I had so much fun before—"

Her eyes dimmed and both Ishilly and Nami clung to her, trying to keep her with them.

"You are such a good person," Nami stared into her eyes, making sure every word was firm and clear. "You went back all that way, to the place of your trauma, trying to make sure we got to this island safely. Camie, you are the biggest sweetheart."

Nami buried her head into the star of her Crimin singlet.

Camie stroked through Nami's long red hair, twirling the ends. "Your hair is longer now," she stated. "But your heart is still as big as ever. You're still my hero."

"Camie, you're mine," Nami rested her chin on her sternum and looked up at her with a brilliant smile. "You saved me from the palace like a knight in shining scales, letting me cling to you as you swam me to freedom."

"Of course," Camie tilted her head. "You're my friend. I wasn't going to leave you there when it was dangerous."

"You put your life on the line for me."

Camie nodded, resolute. "Of course I did."

After a beat, Nami could see the fact sink into Camie's mind. Her jaw slacked, eyes bulged, and tongue flailed around in surprise. "Oh my god I risked my life for my friends—Am I actually a hero now too?"

Nami and Ishilly both snorted with laughter, nodding their heads.

" … Only because you make me brave," Camie said, bashful at the attention and too shy to accept the label.

"Pfft. You worked up your courage all on your own." Nami trailed a hand lazily down the mermaid's abdomen, enjoying the soft muscle her cropped singlet displayed. Camie shivered. Nami raised a brow, smirking. "Ticklish?"

Camie looked between Ishilly and Nami helplessly, raising her hands and flailing them. "Please, no tickle torture—"

"She's very ticklish," Ishilly laughed, smiling wide at the look of betrayal Camie shot her. "Splashes around like a fish out of water if you get the right spot."

"Good to know," Nami purred, filing that information away. "You've been working out haven't you Camie? Those muscles … I've been thinking about them ever since you saved me from the castle. Clinging to them made me feel so secure."

Nami rested her head against Camie's abdominals, kissing her belly

button. Camie stroked her hair with trembling hands.

"I've been really trying to get stronger," Camie admitted. "And more self-sufficient."

"You've been doing great," Ishilly squeezed Camie's bicep. "Working hard at the café, working hard on your health. Nami, sometimes she even beats me when we're racing among the coral reefs. She's gotten so strong and fast. Why don't we have a little race and show off? Give you a ride without the life-or-death struggle of having to escape castle guards and hostile forces? Could be fun."

Nami imagined herself clinging to one mermaid before being tossed to the other like a baton. It made her a little giddy. But she had to play it cool. She checked her nails, looking up at Ishilly with hooded eyes. "Buy me a drink first."

"Oooh, I'll get it!" Camie beamed, dislodging herself from their holds to flag down another waitress.

Nami laughed and put a hand over her arm. "I was just kidding, sweetheart."

"You mean you're not thirsty?" Camie blinked, tilting her head in confusion.

"Only for your kisses," Nami purred, slinging an arm around her and capturing the mermaid's sea-salt lips on her own, appreciating the surprised gasp that emerged from Camie's eager mouth.

"Damn, that was smooth," Ishilly laughed, nudging Nami's lower back as she dipped her girlfriend. "Got any of those for me?"

Nami pulled back from Camie with a wet pop, appreciating the giddy smile

and hazy eyes of the bashful mermaid. Camie's unfocused eyes moved between Nami and Ishilly with bliss as Nami tugged Ishilly forward by a pigtail into a searing kiss.

Ishilly's kisses were teasing, her tongue moving to brush against Nami's lips before darting back. Nami pressed forward into the challenge, practically swallowing the contented sigh that slipped out. Ishilly pulled back only to give Camie a smile and a thumb's up. "She's an amazing kisser. Tastes like tangerine and sunshine."

A strangled gasp from Sanji alerted Nami to the fact that they had company. So wrapped up in their little bubble of crushing and adoration, the rest of the world had slipped away. All of their friends were pointedly looking away and giving them space, but the blood trailing from Sanji's nostrils made them aware he had failed the task. Nami gazed at him unimpressed.

"So, race through the kelp forests?" She smiled in challenge, knowing that no matter what they would all win.

"We can't wait to show you the best ocean coves," Ishilly grinned, linking their arms. Nami smirked as both their tails twined around her, holding her tight and secure between them as they left the café.

From When the Wind Blows

By: Nancy

Nami was many things: beautiful, attractive, skilled, smart, and maybe even a bit short-tempered, but dumb was not one of them.

An *entire* island that welcomes *pirates* with open arms? Gives them food and booze as much as they want and treats them like celebrities? Yeah, and she was the lost princess of a rich kingdom, and Zoro dumps gold in the toilet. She had heard better fantasy tales from drunk, clingy guys in taverns about them fighting Sea Kings with nothing more than two fists and a small boat than whatever it was that was happening right now.

Regardless, Nami played along; she wanted to enjoy the free gifts that the townsfolk thought would be enough to lure them into a false sense of security and see exactly how this would unfold before their crew started to wreck the place if something went south.

A drinking game was the order of the night, and people of Whiskey Peak – a way too fitting name if you asked her- seemed to be in awe at her alcohol tolerance. She had beaten their top contestants like nothing, smiling and laughing during the entire ordeal, playing along with the vibe the people were artificially building with their fake friendly approach.

She watched everything; Nami was good at it. Years of thieving had given her the experience to see beyond the faces of the people in front of her. She would drink an entire mug of beer while at the same time her eyes scanned the place. Looking for a shiny object, potential escape routes, and even the expressions of people, and it was during that moment that Nami saw him for the first time.

She didn't know what caught her eye since the guy wasn't exactly any different from everyone around him. Maybe it was the striking red of his shirt, or maybe it was his relaxed energy in contrast with everyone else's who just tried to be as unnaturally friendly and loud as possible. Maybe it was the fact that Nami couldn't really see the entirety of his face since part

of it was covered with the brim of his brown cowboy hat… or maybe it was the fact that he was directly watching *her*.

Nami let no emotion out. She kept the party act going, drinking and smiling with the rest as the night went on and the rum kept entering her mouth. She knew she had to play drunk with time, acting dizzier and dizzier to give these people a false sense of security, playing them in their own game and beating them without them knowing… a standard Nami move.

She occasionally would look in the direction of that cowboy from time to time, not really knowing why… but each time she did, she would notice more and more of his features, like his slightly long, curly brown hair, or his deep green eyes that seemed like emeralds, or how he had a certain confidence around him but didn't seem arrogant or full of himself… or how actually he was quite handsome…

She shook her head, probably the most minor of the effects of all the alcohol in her body. She possessed a high tolerance, but at this point she had lost count of how many beers she had taken… but it didn't matter; she still could drink more than that.

"This girl is insane!" She heard someone shout, "She already outdrank six men!"

Oh, and that was nothing; she was barely starting. Her eyes scanned the room again and saw Luffy eating his *twelfth* plate of food, his balloon belly starting to form and getting a chuckle out of it. She watched as Sanji was surrounded by beautiful women, his dreamy expression saying everything. Then her gaze moved to Zoro, pouring another beer down his throat and beating his fourth drinking opponent. Finally she looked in the direction of the man in the red shirt again and noticed his hat was not on his head now, letting his wavy brown hair at sight. A man was sitting by his side, encouraging him to join the party with a mug in hand.

"Don't be shy, Logan!" she heard him say to him. So his name was Logan, got it. "You are awfully quiet tonight!"

Nami couldn't hear his answer, something about work to do and how he needed to be clear for it. *Interesting*. The party man left between drunken laughs, leaving his mug in the hands of Logan, the cowboy.

Nami watched as he took a sip of beer, not too much and not too little. His face gave a pleased expression at the taste… and then, without warning, he stood up and walked towards her table. Nami watched as he approached with a confident stride, eyes fixed on her as hers were on him. Once he arrived at her table, he only put the still-full mug on the wooden surface and pushed it towards her with a few words coming from his mouth.

"It tastes good, but I'm not really a beer guy." His voice was soft and friendly; Nami just raised a brow, and her gaze fell on those impressive emerald eyes.

"Bold move, cowboy. I will only take it because I saw you drink from it."

He smiled at her. A sincere, friendly smile that seemed to have no hidden intentions behind. Nami had rarely seen a smile like that. He was by no means the first man that had approached her in a bar, nor will he be the last. But he for sure was one of the most different.

Nami liked that.

"Enjoy the party. It's a beautiful night." Nami didn't know if the 'beautiful' part was really directed at the night or at her. Either way, the way he said it made her feel… something, something she wasn't sure what it was…

Without another word, he left the table and then the room. She took the mug he left and took a sip. Ready to continue with her act.

When she faked being asleep, the party began to die down as each of the members of her crew, one by one, passed out either from drinking or eating too much. Nami heard the room slowly emptying itself and waited a couple of minutes before she snuck out of it into the streets.

And damn it, that cowboy was right; it was in fact a beautiful night.

She decided to explore a bit. Using her stealth skills, she got to take a good look at the town. Whiskey Peak had a certain charm to it, and the moonlight cast over the buildings and empty streets was calm and almost welcoming. On a closer look though, the cactus mountains covered in headstones were a creepy touch. Oh, that and the man that had been following her on the rooftops since she left the building.

If he was trying to be silent, Nami wouldn't know. His steps were too heavy wherever he was walking or landing on another roof. This presence was too obvious, heavy breathing, rarely covering himself, trying to follow her pace bit by bit instead of having a significant distance between them.

Nami had been walking in circles for a while now, testing his patience, but the guy was determined to just follow her, and granted, she didn't feel any bad intentions from him.

It was exciting to a certain degree, like a game between them, and tonight she was feeling like playing.

"You can come out, you know? No need to hide like that!" She spoke to the air, fully knowing she was not alone.

"I knew you weren't that easy to trick." A voice said behind her, a man's voice.

"Well, you are not much of a stealth guy, you know? I can hear you clearly."

"Maybe I don't want to be. Maybe I do want to be noticed." He answered, and his voice was calm and somehow familiar.

She quickly spun on her heels, ready to confront the owner, but nobody was in sight.

"Up here!" she heard again.

Nami looked up and from the roof of the building in front of her there was a man, a familiar man with brown hair and a red shirt.

Wait a minute, did he really just give his position like that?

"Oh, so we do have a smart one here. Or not really; a smart man wouldn't give his advantage like that." Nami teased, hands on her hip.

"Oh, there's not really an advantage; I just got bored of waiting. Besides, I like the view from here."

Was he making fun of her?

"Waiting? For me? Well that makes me feel honored!" She said jokingly, "You are clearly smarter than your other friends, who think they can lure us into an obvious trap."

Nami saw him rub the back of his head. "Yeah, they often think they are big stuff, but nobody here dares to check the newspaper, and if they do, they really don't pay attention."

"And you do?" He got her curious with that comment.

"Of course I do! I have to be alert at everything!"

"Well, if you do, then you know my captain is not to mess with!" flashes of Luffy punching Arlong in his face so hard that his mighty teeth broke crossed her mind and a slight smirk formed on her lips.

"Of course I do. I'm not gonna mess with the guy that beat Arlong!" Now that made Nami almost jump. Nobody knew about that; the Marines had covered that *specific* part of the story in order to not come across like the bunch of *incompetent idiots* they were. How the hell did this guy know?

"What makes you think there's a relationship there?"

"Oh, it's actually pretty simple." He pulled a cookie out of his pocket and offered one to Nami, but she rejected it from a distance. He took a big bite of it before continuing talking. "Arlong disappears for ten years after Jinbe moves strings to get his ass out of jail and *then* he suddenly reappears. In the East Blue. *Defeated*. Just like that. *Then* two days later, this Straw Hat guy pops up out of nowhere in the *East Blue* with a 30,000,000 bounty on his head. I don't believe in coincidences."

Damn, he was good.

"So what, you want my captain's head and are following me here to use me as bait?"

He looked at her, directly into her eyes and then… he only *laughed*, hard.

"*Ha ha ha*, no! *Goodness*, no! I need to get as *far away* from him as I can! Someone strong enough to beat Arlong is not someone I want to cross!" He only kept laughing, an infectious laugh that Nami had to fight hard against.

"Well, it sounds like that Arlong guy wasn't as strong as he thought he was." And with that she turned around ready to keep walking.

"Wait!" He said, and Nami was waiting for him to say that. She was really not ready to quit playing; after all, when would she have another chance?

"Still wanting to chase after me, cowboy?" She teased, not turning around.

"I mean, I'm pretty sure I can catch you." She could almost feel the *grin* on his lips.

Nami scoffed at that "Oh, you are feeling confident, huh?"

"I believe I am, lady!"

"Care to prove it?"

He waited a couple of seconds before responding; maybe he was confused.

"What do you have in mind?"

Nami smirked. "How about a race? The first one to circle the island and get to the tavern wins, but we stay in sight all the time!"

"And if I win?" He teased her.

"Well, then you win! Unless you want something in return." She could feel the vein pop in her forehead and almost facepalmed herself. Those words had escaped her mouth and now there was no way to get them back. She knew what he was going to say and was readying herself for it.

She didn't look back at him, her eyes were locked at her front, and somehow she didn't feel any danger giving her back to him. There was something about him that made her feel he was no danger to her…

"What about a kiss?"

She took that back.

“Absolutely no way!” She shouted with all her power. If someone was asleep, they would surely wake up at that.

“Alright, alright! Ready when you are.”

Nami took a deep breath and then she ran. She ran like she always did: with a man after her, she was used to men chasing her even if this one seemed a bit nice. Her legs got a powerful workout as she sprinted across the coast with him behind her. She scrambled up ladders, got tangled in the laundry, jumped over rooftops, and ran through the mud -all in the name of winning.

Her chest felt heavy and her heart was racing. She was sure they were close to the finish. She was readying herself to turn her speed up when suddenly Nami saw the shadow on the roofs at her left following her pace. He was not behind her anymore, he was matching her, and with a big jump to the street, now he was ahead of her.

Now it was interesting.

With a smirk on her face and a funny feeling in her belly, she gave chase, quicking her pace to catch up to him.

The guy, Logan, now that she remembered, knew the place well, knew where to jump, where to spin, where to go slow and where to speed up. He was a challenge and Nami liked the idea. She did, however, find the way he moved his arms while running a bit funny. They would go up and down and front to back at the same time, like if he was swimming instead of running. The wind was blowing strong for some reason. She felt held back, not running at the usual speed she was capable of, but he didn’t seem to be

bothered by said wind. In other circumstances she would have paid attention earlier but her being concentrated on catching up kept her mind and instincts busy.

It was only when she heard the absolute *panic* in his voice when he *almost* stumbled and fell on a river that it clicked for her.

This cheater!

“Hold on a minute!” she shouted, but her voice fell on deaf ears as he crossed their arranged finish line and arrived at the tavern.

She stopped running and instead approached with heavy steps, menacingly.

“You are a *goddamn* cheater!” She yelled at him when he was close enough. And by the expression of his face, he clearly wasn’t expecting to get caught.

“I don’t know what you are talking about!” He played dumb, but Nami was not dumb.

"You think I wouldn't notice?! Maybe other people wouldn't but I'm not an idiot, cowboy! The slight pressure change? The way you move your hands when you are running? The almost-imperceptible for-other-people-but-not-for-me acceleration of the wind to slow me down? The fact you avoid water like your life depends on it? You have a Devil Fruit, something related to the wind, I guess. And you are very good at hiding it.”

He raised his arm, showing his palms, and with a smile said "One has to be smart in this profession! Can’t let the people I hunt know everything about me."

"Oh, come on! Don't pat yourself On the back that hard. For someone like

me, your act is easy to pick up." She approached him closely, her finger tapping on his chest with her words. "You are smart, alright? but I'm smarter."

He chuckled, a sincere and amused one, and said, "I can figure a ton about you as well!"

She raised a brow.

"Is that so, cowboy? You think you are clever enough?"

"I can certainly try. I can tell you that you are *way* stronger than you look. The way you jumped over those rooftops? amazing, and impossible for someone normal. I can also tell you that you are *really* fast, *too* fast I would say. Almost like you have been running your whole life."

Nami was about to say something but no voice left her mouth…

Flashes of memories came to her mind. Nami, barefoot in rags, speeding through the streets and alleys with a bag of money on her shoulder as heavy as her. Gunshots and curses heard behind her, the whistle of the bullets coming close to her, the sharp pain on her arms or legs when they caressed her skin with their deadly kiss…

It was his voice that snapped her back.

"Sorry… Did I stroke a bad nerve or…?" There was sincere concern in his voice, she could tell. Why was he like that? So honest, so open… She couldn't understand. He didn't strike her as any different from the other people who tried to make moves on her. He challenged her and wanted a kiss as a reward; how could he be any different from any other person?... and yet, Nami could feel it. She could feel that honesty, that openness. How could he be any different from other men?… unless he was.

Nami said nothing, just stared at him, her heart hitting her chest when she realized how close they actually were. Her own look fixated on those green eyes glowing with pure sincerity… and care. The moonlight coming from behind her made them shine like a pair of emeralds… a pair of emeralds she wanted…

Oh…

“No, it’s fine.” She said, playing with her hair to fake fix it, trying to move the attention from her blush and wishing the night was dark enough for him not to notice it. “You are just an odd guy, that’s all… But you got pretty close, cowboy.”

Maybe the feeling in her gut was fine after all. This guy really seemed like a nice guy. And it’s not like she was going to return to this island soon, so might as well…

"You are still a cheater…” She smacked his chest softly with the back of her hand. He was firm; she liked that. “Fine, you won. What would you want?"

"Well… I did say a kiss… but to be honest, I was actually not speaking seriously.” He rubbed the back of his neck nervously.

Nami raised a brow, again.

“What are you saying, that you don’t want to feel *these*?” She moved her fingers to her lips, slowly caressing them to get her point across. She almost laughed when she saw Logan’s face turn as red as his shirt.

“I-I-I d-didn’t say that!” His nervous stutter was cute. Men were so easy to knock off their confident ground. “I wasn’t talking seriously in the sense that I won’t take advantage of our deal!”

He had a point, and Nami respected that. Sadly, she wasn't in the mood for righteousness… She had made up her mind two minutes ago.

"That's such a shame… but we had a deal. So, even if you are a cheater, you still won."

Nami could see the confusion in his face "Wait, what are you saying?"

She took a step forward, chin up. "Pick your prize. What do you *want*?" That was as explicit of a permission as it could be and she was hoping he would take the hint.

Luckily, he did and he took a step forward as well.

"Well… if you are talking seriously… then a kiss would be nice if you decide to give it to me."

Nami bit her lips and closed the distance more with another step, hands on her hips and eyes fixed on his. Now just inches separating them.

"And if I don't desire to give it to you?" Nami said with a playful smile, her words not really matching her playful tone.

"Well, I have to respect that… Or I can deal with your fury." Logan responded with a similar tone.

"You think you can handle that?" She almost laughed, her heart punching against her chest.

"I know you are tough. I noticed the moment you set foot on the island. You need to be if you enter the Grand Line and if you want to keep those idiots in check."

Nami leaned in more, enough to feel the heat of his skin from a distance. Her face went even closer, to the point they were almost nose to nose.

"Watch your mouth, cowboy, that's my crew you are talking about. But again, you are pretty close, so like I said before, it looks like you do know what you are talking about."

Nami could hear Logan's heart racing, or maybe it was hers, she didn't know and at this point didn't care. He went for it, slowly aiming for her lips, but Nami threw a bite to the air between them.

"Careful, you don't want to get hurt." Her playful smile shone on her lips. He returned it.

"And letting go of a once in a lifetime chance? Maybe I do want to get hurt."

This was it. He wanted it, she wanted it, and Nami was ready for it.

"Then shut your mouth and *kiss* me."

Both leaned in, meeting halfway. Their lips clashed hungrily. He tasted like strawberries, surprisingly. He deepened the kiss, wanting to taste more of it, greedy as she was. Logan wrapped his hands around her with a force but softness at the same time, pulling her closer. Nami allowed herself to be pulled in. Her tongue was looking for an entrance and Logan quickly let her in. Their tongues clashed, fought, and danced. The eagerness grew with each second and Nami felt a heat growing inside of her that she was fighting with all her might to keep under control. She could feel his hands rub circles all around her back, moving up and down from one side to another, and she appreciated how they stayed on *just* her back and not daring to venture into *forbidden* territory. Nami took note of that. She moved her hands as well, one going to the back of his head and pushing

him in too, the other reaching to his back and pulling him closer with force. She had never felt something like this, so passionate, so eager, so… right.

After what felt like an eternity, both pulled apart slowly, not wanting to let the moment end.

"Not bad, cowboy," she said, biting the corner of her lower lip. Nami took Logan's hands, intertwining her fingers with his. "Not bad at all…" She separated the arms to his sides slowly until they were fully open… And then she spun on her heels, using her speed and his own weight against him to throw him to the ground. Logan's back hit the floor, and Nami wasted no time, jumping on top of him without letting go of his hands and softly putting her knee on his neck, a chuckle coming out of her.

Logan took a look around with wide eyes, incredulous but from his lips only came an amused sound.

"Huh..."

"I told you, cowboy. You were gonna get hurt." She smiled as she said it and Nami noticed his eyes were awestruck, as if her smile was one of the most beautiful things Logan had ever seen… if she could say it herself, of course.

"I know. You are tough; I like that." He beamed at her with his shining teeth.

"You like a woman that can kick your butt?" Her question almost came with a laugh.

"Yeah," there it was, that sincerity in his voice and a smile on his lips, a deadly combination that so far had made her feel… things. Nami couldn't help but notice how his brown hair shined a bit with the same moonlight…

"You are so dumb…" Nami didn't know if the 'dumb' part of the comment was for him… Or directed to herself.

"You like a dumb man?" His stupid grin was still in place. It was contagious.

"Yeah," she answered with the same sincerity as him.

"What are we waiting for then?" His tone was almost a challenge mixed with a chuckle.

Nami bit her lower lip for the third time that night.

“That’s for sure a tempting offer… but, it’s time for me to find my friends; I’m sure the sane ones must be awake somewhere by now.”

Without removing her knee from his neck, she leaned in and took a quick peck at his lips, innocent, playful. A taste for another time… and just as a huge explosion in the distance illuminated their surroundings.

“What the hell?!” she exclaimed.

“What in the name of…?” Logan was equally as confused; he had no idea just as her.

She quickly got to her feet looking at the pillar of smoke near the sealine. “I bet you a million berries that must be my crew… causing a ruckus already.” She rubbed the sides of her nose with her hand, exasperated. She could feel the stress of their future escape from the island starting to run in her veins.

“They sure have great timing, hahaha!”

Nami smiled, they sure did. “I have to go now.”

“I know. Probably a hard wish, but… would I see you again?”

“Maybe, maybe not. Depends if our journeys cross paths again in friendly manners, *bounty hunter*.”

“In that you are right, but I will never go after your captain, he seems like a nice guy. Also, I can probably never beat him, so you can be sure it will be a friendly meeting!” He was honest about that, she could feel it.

She could only smile at him.

“Until we meet again, Logan!” She readied herself to run to the commotion but his words stopped her.

“One more thing, can I know your name?”

“Haha, the name is Nami, like the waves!”

“Nami… that is actually beautiful…” His words made her blush again. “Keep an eye from where the wind blows, Miss Nami. You may see me on the horizon one day.”

"I'm the navigator of the future Pirate King, cowboy. I always have an eye on it!" She winked at him and showed her tongue, and with that she ran towards the ruckus, towards her crew.

A soft gust of warm wind hit her from behind, like a pair of fingers caressing her hair lovingly and giving her a small boost in speed.

She hoped with her beating heart to feel that again one day.

Credits

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Front & Back Cover

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Vogel

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LoShiro

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@Lo_Shiro

@lo_shiro

@loshiro

Sodapop

Page 107

@onepiecetcg

@sodapoptown

Roonie

Page 93

@witchyroonie

@witchyroonie

Morpheus

Page 5

@CherubMorpheus

doodleplus

Page 70

@doodleplus

@doodle.plus

Pink Unicorn Parade

Page 38

@pink-unicorns

Artists

Credits

Nen K.0

Page 72

@nen_k0

@nen-k0

M1gnt

Page 81

@m1gnt

@m1gnt

erbezdiez

Page 37

@erbezdiez

@erbezdiez

@erbezdiez

Lizz

Page 108

@lesbian_himbo

@lizzbian_himbo

@lizzbian-himbo

BearyDevilish

Page 94

@bearydevilish

Citrusmaps

Page 109

@citrusmaps

@citrusmaps

cara.app/citrusmaps

Shrimp

Page 165

@mistershr1mp

@mistershr1mp

@mistershrimp

Erza Briefs

Page 138

@Erzabriefs

@erza_briefs

Júlia Shephard

Page 49

@juliashephard_

@juliashephard

Artists

Credits

CrowSizna

Page 20

@CrowSizna
@crowsizna
@crowsizna

Firefly

Page 166

@firefly-artwork
@firefly_artwork
@firefly-artwork

J. Bonney

Page 104

@jbonney
@j-bonney
@jbonney

Bummie

Page 15

@j_bummie

Pluubyy

Page 48

@pluubyy
@pluubyy

Artists

Credits

anaarlips

Pages 110-125

@HimejoshL

vannahfanfics

Pages 95-103

@vannahfanfics

@vannahfanfics

Emily Fowl

Pages 126-137

@fowlfics

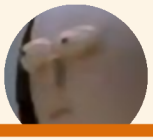
Clown

Pages 82-92, 144-150

@swaglittlesystem

@autisticaboutstufflol

@Autismabtstuff



GemmaRose

Pages 39-48, 51-56

@GemmaRose

@GemmaRose

Rory

Pages 6-19

@crossmyhart_x

@rorynyx

Writers

Credits

Three

Pages 152-164

@fivedayslater
@threedayslater
@5dayslayer

WonderGarden

Pages 73-80

@wondergarden
@wondergarden
@WonderGarden

Katia_Anyway

Pages 59-67, 139-142

@Katia_Anyway
@katia-anyway
@katia-anyway

Meg

Pages 22-36

@kawaiigroovycat
@cloudbreaker11037

Ritsuko Ryoku

Page 71

@ritsukotheloner
@RitsukoRyoku

Writers

Credits

Nancy

Head Mod, Pgs 181-197

@Desert_Queen_Nancy

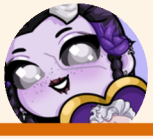
@Coconut_Nancy

Muti

Graphics Mod

@Muti_Art

@muti-art



Bam

Writing Mod

@drawing_fox_in_the_woods

@fox_inda_woods

PiratePlunder

Writing Mod, Pgs 168-180

@PiratePlunderOP

@PiratePlunder

Cap|Mandy|Moe

Art Mod

@captainbutterbuns

@CaptainButterBuns

@capbutterbuns

Tiffany

Social Media Mod

@placesacross

@placesacross

Gali-La

Formatting Mod

@gali-la

@gali-la

@Gali_Laa

Mods

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